

DE QUINCEY'S EDITORSHIP
OF THE
WESTMORLAND GAZETTE
1818 - 1819

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DE QUINCEY'S EDITORSHIP

OF

The Westmorland Gazette.

DE QUINCEY'S
EDITORSHIP
OF
The Westmorland Gazette,

WITH
SELECTIONS FROM HIS WORK ON THAT JOURNAL,

FROM
JULY, 1818, TO NOVEMBER, 1819.

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ATKINSON AND POLLITT.
LONDON :
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DE QUINCEY

AND

The Westmorland Gazette.

DR. Alexander W. Japp (Mr. "H. A. Page") in his "Life and Writings of Thomas De Quincey," expressed the opinion that the English Opium Eater was "not born for a successful newspaper Editor." He established this literary heresy as "an accepted truth," by printing a few rather curious than characteristic specimens of De Quincey's Editorial work, as a whole, on the *Westmorland Gazette*, and all subsequent biographers and critics, knowing nothing of the true literary and political charm and value of his contributions to the columns of that newspaper, have been content to re-echo Dr. Japp's opinion. It is true that Professor Masson, in his charming monograph ("English Men of Letters" Series) admits that "after all De Quincey seems to have done not badly in his Editorship, even by the standard of the Tory gentlemen of Westmorland;" and he adds, "one thing the Editorship had done for De Quincey himself: it had given him a liking for the sight of printers' proofs; accordingly, his Editorship of the *Westmorland Gazette* having come to an end some time in 1820, or been converted, by an understanding with the proprietors, into a mere contributorship thenceforward, he was on the out-look for other literary employment."

The precise date of De Quincey's termination of his engagement on the *Westmorland Gazette* was Nov. 5, 1819, as shown by the minute book of the Proprietors, now in my possession. Professor Masson is, therefore, wrong about the year in which De Quincey gave up the Editorship of the *Westmorland Gazette*. The minute book contains this entry under date August 19, 1818: "That Mr. De Quincey be paid £9 for the three first weeks that he was engaged, and one guinea for each of the three last weeks." The

"guinea a week" was for De Quincey's leaders and articles written for the *Gazette*, the rest of the original salary went to a sub-editor, who it had been found necessary to employ to do the compilation of the paper. This carries his engagement back to July 11, 1818, and his strong handed style appears in the leader of the succeeding issue on July 18. From that date onward there are evidences in the minute book of the *Gazette* of recurring misunderstandings, if not irritating "bickerings," between the Editor and the Proprietors. The crisis came in the autumn of 1819. Unfortunately, De Quincey's letters, remonstrances, or explanations, if he wrote or made any, were not entered on the minutes, otherwise more light might have been thrown on the precise causes that led to the rupture. An examination of files of the paper indicate as one of the reasons, "incompatability of mind and purpose" in the conduct of the paper. I remember many years ago having read a letter from De Quincey to the Proprietors, in which he laid the cause of his absence from the office on a critical occasion to the fact that he had to journey in winter time seventeen miles from Grasmere to Kendal in a chaise through snow above a foot deep, and the difficulty of travelling under such circumstances had prevented him reaching the office in time. De Quincey at that time occupied Dove Cottage (so called from having formerly been an inn with the sign of a dove and an olive branch), Grasmere. This cottage, "with two yew trees breaking the glare of its white walls," formerly had been occupied by Wordsworth, and De Quincey minutely describes the cottage as he saw it on his visit to Wordsworth in 1807, in his "Recollections of the Lakes and the Lake Poets."

A minute under date, June 29th, 1819, says:—"That an intimation be made to the Editor expressing their (the Proprietors') sentiments of the great importance of a regular communication between the Editor and the Proprietors of the *Westmorland Gazette* by want of which it appears that great inconvenience has frequently arisen from the exclusion of the latest London news; and the Committee trust that the Editor will take effectual measures in future to prevent a recurrence of that inconvenience which they conceive has arisen from his residing at so great a distance, from the office. They also beg to suggest to the Editor the propriety of abstaining from direct remarks on any productions or observations which may appear in the *Kendal Chronicle*,

"Resolved: That a copy of the preceding resolutions be sent to the Editor by the Secretary.

"That the Committee hold their next meeting as soon as the Secretary receives a communication from the Editor."

This resolution brought matters to a crisis, for I find that the next minute is dated "King's Arms, Kendal, 5th November, 1819," where a special meeting of the Proprietors was summoned in consequence of the resignation of Mr. De Quincey. As those who attended that meeting were representatives of the Tory Party in Kendal at that day I append their names:—Rev. Jno. Hudson,* Vicar; Chrstr. Wilson, Esq. (in the chair), Mr. John Gandy, Alderman W. Wilson, Alderman T. Harrison, J. F. Swainson, Jos. Swainson, jun., Daniel Harrison, Jas. Johnson, Isaac Hadwen, Wm. Braithwaite, Thos. Holme Maude, Esq. These gentlemen resolved "That Mr. De Quincey be respectfully informed that his resignation is accepted." This is the last time De Quincey's name appears in the minutes of the *Westmorland Gazette*.

An examination of the files of the *Westmorland Gazette* during De Quincey's Editorship certainly confirms the opinion that the work was irksome, uncongenial, and frequently distasteful. But, "if nothing succeeds like success," there is equal proof that he possessed some of the very highest qualities of an Editor. If he occasionally soared considerably "over the heads of his readers," he certainly raised the literary character of the paper. He also worked laboriously under most irritating circumstances, and fought the battle of Toryism with quite chivalric enthusiasm. That, be it remembered, was at a time when party spirit ran high and political warfare was conducted in the most approved Billingsgate style. If De Quincey sometimes graced his most ardent attacks and retorts with classic allusions and apt literary illustrations clothed in nervous English, it must be admitted that he too frequently took up weapons of a rough and ready sort. To Editorial work of this kind he was certainly provoked by the weekly assaults of the *Kendal Chronicle* and its Radical correspondents. These appear to have been of the most offensive personal character, but it must be admitted that they were liberally paid back in kind. In the extracts which follow, no attempt will be made to revive the details of these controversies.

* One of Dawson's pupils and Senior Wrangler in 1797, afterwards Fellow and Tutor of Trinity, and subsequently Vicar of Kendal, 1815-43.

Without consulting the files of the defunct *Chronicle** it would be impossible to form even approximately a correct judgment on their merits, and even *when* found it would hardly be worth while to "take a note of." I shall content myself with briefly explaining the circumstances under which De Quincey became Editor of the *Westmorland Gazette*, and reproduce only such specimens of his Editorial work that possess a permanent value as throwing additional light on the literary labours of one of the most illustrious men of letters of the age.

When De Quincey became Editor of the *Gazette*, in 1818, the hard fight was just over between Lord Lowther and his brother Colonel Lowther, on behalf of the Tories, and Mr. Henry Brougham, who, in conjunction with the Blues of the county, had undertaken the contest to try and break the Lowther monopoly of the representation of Westmorland, which they had then held unopposed for thirty years. In this the future Lord Chancellor was unsuccessful, as he was in his two subsequent tussles with the Lowthers. The close of the poll on Friday, July 10th, 1818, showed the votes to have been, for Lord Lowther 1,211, Hon. Colonel Lowther 1,158, and Mr. Brougham 889. Mr. Brougham's Kendal and Appleby Committees announced on the following morning that "at the close of the poll yesterday the contest for the county was given up." Both sides had worked hard with voice and pen. Wordsworth, under the *nom de plume* of "Philadelphus," wrote a long letter to the *Westmorland Gazette* in which he vigorously attacked Mr. Clarkson, the Abolitionist, and Mr. Brougham, in whose favour Clarkson had written. Thus, by hard canvassing and letter writing, the interest of the electors throughout the quiet Westmorland dales and hillsides had been kept up at fever heat in speculating how the election would go, after the county had been blessed by so long a truce from political turmoil. Brougham threw himself into the contest with all the energy of his nature. He spared himself in nothing, but Conservatism was too strong a growth in Westmorland to be beaten even by his fiery onslaught. All the help that the then

* The *Kendal Chronicle* was published for the last time on April 26th, 1834. In a note to correspondents the Proprietor says—"We understand that the paper that is to take our place is to be called the *Kendal Mercury*, and that the name of the *Chronicle* is to be dropped. No doubt the new paper will advocate the same political principles as we have. May it achieve the miracle of pleasing every Reformer." The first number of the *Kendal Mercury* was published on May 17th, 1834.

hereditary Sheriff of the county, the Earl of Thanet, could bring to bear was ungrudgingly put forth in Brougham's favour. Yet on the second day it was evident that the Blues were fighting a hopeless battle. At the close Mr. Brougham declared that "the Lowthers would have to meet him there at every election while he lived. If he died they would not be secure of their prey, for a flame would break forth from his ashes which would utterly consume their oppressors." Mr. Brougham threw up the sponge on Friday and the poll was closed. In publishing the above returns the Editor of the *Gazette* says—"In addition to these Lists, 44 Freeholders tendered their votes on Saturday morning for Lord and Colonel Lowther; and Freeholders in their interest were pouring into Appleby on all sides. Had the whole been polled, the majority would at least be increased 200 beyond its present number." It was in the midst of this excitement, during which all the old fighting instincts of the Border men were aroused, that De Quincey entered upon his novel duties of Editor of the *Westmorland Gazette*.

A few words only are here necessary to explain the circumstances under which Thomas De Quincey became the Editor of the *Westmorland Gazette* so far as these relate to his personal career, and the early years of his long residence in the Lake District. After leaving Oxford in 1808, De Quincey determined to return and settle at Grasmere, or as near as possible to the residence of Wordsworth; but before doing so, he did his illustrious friend a signal service by editing, adding an appendix to, and correcting the proofs of the once famous pamphlet on "The Convention of Cintra." The merits of that controversy have long since been settled, and it is at this date not easy to appreciate adequately the fierceness of spirit with which it was carried on. At that time the only two men who thoroughly understood it, and all its necessities and consequences—Wellington and Napoleon—approved of it, and posterity has endorsed that view. The incident derives its interest to us, and in relation to the life of De Quincey, that the work he did, and did so admirably, for Wordsworth, was the means of more closely and firmly cementing the friendship between them. As all readers familiar with the literature of the Lake Poets know, the duty of arranging for De Quincey's occupation of Dove Cottage at Grasmere, from where the Wordsworths removed to Rydal Mount,

fell upon the immortal Dorothy, "thoughtful, careful, discreet Dorothy," as Dr. Japp justly calls her. The correspondence of De Quincey beautifully justify the praise, and the recent publication of Professor Knight's "Life of Wordsworth," amply shows that the Poet's sister was something more than a mere thoughtful careful, discreet woman:—a woman gifted with the spirit of divine poetry herself. "And so," writes Dr. Japp, in his admirable "Life of De Quincey," "he entered upon the occupation of the little cottage, which henceforth for a quarter of a century, was to be closely identified with his name, after having been hallowed to my mind, by the seven years occupation of that illustrious tenant (Wordsworth) during perhaps the happiest period of his life;—the early years of his marriage and of the first acquaintance with parental affection." It was here De Quincey married Miss Simpson, the daughter of a Grasmere yeoman, and "settled down" to literary work, with occasional flying visits to London, Somerset, Edinburgh, and elsewhere.

De Quincey's contributions to the columns of the *Westmorland Gazette* were necessarily of a very miscellaneous character, and strictly scientific or homogeneous classification is impossible. Nevertheless, it has been deemed advisable to group the extracts under three "heads." The first—*Memorabilia*—relate to De Quincey's *personal* appeals to his readers, answers to correspondents, &c. These reveal individual traits of character, if not essential to a correct judgment of De Quincey the man, as distinguished from De Quincey the philosopher, will aid somewhat in that direction. The second group of extracts will be strictly Political, and the third Literary, Philosophical, and Economic.

CHARLES POLLITT.

Thorny Hills, Kendal,
July, 1890.

MEMORABILIA.

As has already been explained, De Quincey entered upon his Editorial duties at a period of great political excitement, and in his first direct personal address to his readers we recognize the form, the features, and spirit of those memorable apologies, explanations, magnificent promises, and remonstrances in which he indulged during his term of office. Brougham had just been defeated, and delivered himself at Kendal of one of his most famous, or shall I say infamous, attacks on the Lowther family. It is necessary to refer to this incident for the clearer understanding of De Quincey's first Editorial announcement. In his speech Brougham said :—

“As soon as Parliament is dissolved they (the Lowthers) will have to meet me here at every election while I live ; even in my death they will not be secure of their prey ; for such a spirit will be created that *a flame will burst from my ashes which will utterly consume their oppressors.*”

“Perhaps,” asks a contemporary, “the Westmorlanders will make a drum of his skin, like a second Zisca, and beat the row-de-dow of confusion upon, to, corruption in all ages.” De Quincey at once seized upon Brougham's frenzied harangue and declared that “the snake is scotched, not killed ; the spirit of error is not dead, but sleeping ; and sleeping only in respect to the ultimate object proposed, but active and alive for purposes of immediate annoyance.” He then proceeds with his Editorial *Pronunciamento* in the following strain :—

“This spirit must be met by adequate counteraction ; and as one mode of conducting it, and in contribution to more powerful efforts from the resident gentry, this Paper will henceforth call the attention of the public, from time to time, to a dispassionate examination of all those questions in politics and legislation to which the errors above-mentioned chiefly point. In the prosecution of this plan, it is not designed to keep awake the angry spirit,

or to revive the local personalities, to which the heat of contest has given birth : that would be forborne, if it were only to obtain a hearing from those of the opposite party. The purpose is, to present to the consideration of the Yeomanry of Westmorland and the Artizans of this town, in a series of short essays, as much as possible abstracted from what is specific and personal to the present case and parties, a clear exposition, and if it is possible a satisfactory solution, of the leading political questions which concern our time and nation. An early notice will be given of the substance and order of the essays ; and when this is done it is hoped that, in consideration of the end proposed, assistance will be given as their opportunities of leisure allow, by some of the many intelligent and powerful minded men, for whom this town is so highly reputed ; and who, no doubt, in smaller bodies, are spread over the face of the county. The Editor trusts that this assistance will be given, in future more and more readily, in proportion as it comes to be felt from his tone and manner—be his deficiencies ever so conspicuous as to skill and ability, and however lamentably he may fall short of the success which he would willingly obtain—that he has written with deliberation, and with an earnest desire to enlighten the uneducated, and according to the measure of his knowledge, and in perfect fidelity to the suggestions of his conscience.”

De Quincey had entered upon a thorny path, and he did not smooth the way by employing towards his enemies the soft answer that turneth away wrath. He was assailed by the *Kendal Chronicle* as a “venal scribbler,” an “old Jacobin,” and a “degraded character,” all of which sounds quite ludicrous in the true light we now possess of Thomas De Quincey. The reply showed our Editor in “good form” as a strong and vituperative controversialist ; in fact, his vocabulary of abuse was notoriously copious, richly varied, always incisive, and garnished with the graces of scholarly illustration and allusion. In this respect few Editors of modern time could rival Thomas De Quincey, and the late James Hannay, for some years Editor of the defunct Tory *Daily Courant* of Edinburgh, alone could surpass him. De Quincey, after unburdening his soul, proceeds to make another avowal and explanation of his intentions as Editor. It is couched in the following passages :—

“Accordingly he has noticed the attack in question—solely

because it presented a fit occasion for explaining by what law he designs to guide himself in respect to such attacks for the future. He designs never to waste one word upon mere personal controversy, unaccompanied by attempts at argument: he designs this chiefly out of respect to the Public, and to the Proprietors of this Paper; and in some degree also out of self-respect. He has no time to spare for disputes concerning any subject so unimportant as himself; nor is there much space that can be spared for such purposes in the columns of this Paper. The late Canvass and Election, as managed by the supporters of Mr. Brougham, have left for all patriotic men much to do, and more to undo: and to this service he for one, with a total neglect of what concerns his own name individually, is preparing to address himself as energetically as he can. At the same time he is anxious to receive advise and admonition from all quarters; and will not allow any angry or unjust expressions, levelled at himself personally, to stand in the way of the profit which he may reap from communications that may be in other points worthy of respect. Having said this, he need not add, that to friendly advice in a friendly spirit he will lend a tenfold attention: he is conscious that indignation, even where properly directed as to its object, may in its expression pass the limits of temperance and seasonable policy; and, wherever this is pointed out to him, he will heartily express his sorrow, and will acknowledge his error *practically* by reforming it.—For, though he cannot alter his opinion materially as to the tendencies of the late struggle, he is aware that the time and the occasion should always suggest temperaments and restraints to any feeling; and he would take great blame to himself if, by any irritating words of his, he should, in any man's mind, injure that just cause which, in one mode of supporting it, the Proprietors of this Paper have done him the honor to confide to his discretion."

In the *Gazette* for August 1, 1818, we have the first indication of one of the great changes De Quincey made in the general "get up" of the paper. It contains no editorial matter and hardly any general and local news. As a set off there are pretty full reports of the Yorkshire, Hertford, Salisbury, Wilts, and Winchester Assizes. During the whole of his connection with the paper, assize news formed, not only a prominent, but frequently an all-absorbing portion of available space. The author's

fascination for the grim and ghastly incidents of life, so artistically shown in one of his very first essays in *Blackwood's Magazine* after he left the *Gazette*, viz., "Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts," is shown, not only in the detailed publication of trials all over the country, but in the careful selection of peculiarly mysterious and revolting cases. This state of things necessitated frequent apologies for the non-insertion of important news and communications, of which the following in the issue of the date mentioned is a fair specimen :—

"‘R. W.’ and ‘T. X.’ are informed, that in order to adjust their communications to the space left by the heavy pressure of Assize news, it was necessary to take a greater liberty of compression and omission than under other circumstances would have been done. To ‘R. W.’ in particular the Editor has further to apologize for having altered and supplied a word or two for the purpose of restoring the connexion, which had in two instances been disturbed by the abridgments here accounted for."

Again on August 8th he publishes over the column where Editorial matter ought to have appeared, but was "crowded out," the following :—

"‘A BRITON,’ ‘PHILADELPHUS ALTER,’ and ‘A FATHER TO HIS SON,’ are informed that it has not been found possible to insert their communications entire in this number, the columns being so much loaded with Assize news. It has even been found necessary to defer until next week part of that very Assize news ; in particular, the very interesting trial of Hussey, the evidence on whose trial had been collated, abstracted, and re-arranged purposely for this Paper."

"This week it will be observed that our columns are occupied almost exclusively with Assize Reports. We have thought it right to allow them precedence of all other news, whether domestic or foreign, for the three following reasons :—

First, Because to all ranks alike they possess a powerful and commanding interest ;

Secondly, Because to the more uneducated classes they yield a singular benefit, by teaching them their social duties in the most impressive shape ; that is to say, not in a state of abstraction from all that may explain, illustrate, and enforce them (as in the naked terms of the Statute) ; but exemplified (and, as the logicians say, *concreted*,) in the actual circumstances of an inter-

esting case, and in connection with the penalties that accompany their neglect or their violation ;

Thirdly, Because they present the best indications of the moral condition of society : taken for twenty-five years together, there is no doubt that from these Reports, better than from any other source, may the statesman and the moralist appraise the true state of this country ; and determine the problem which, in respect to its vital interests, is of leading concern -- whether, in what relates to morals and respect for the written law, it be in a progressive state, (or, as some allege), in a state of declension."

The same issue of the paper contains an account of the execution of Hussey for the murder of Mr. Bird and his housekeeper, at Greenwich, on the 7th of February, 1818, but the evidence given at his trial does not appear until August 15th, when it is printed in full. As far as the readers of the *Gazette* were concerned, this was a case of "Jeddart Justice,"—first hang a man, then try him. De Quincey's explanation of this feat is contained in the following notice to his readers :—

"The Editor has printed in this week's Paper the Trial of Hussey, which, though prepared for publication, was of necessity excluded from last week's Paper in behalf of the greater general interest connected with the account of his Execution. It is now given for the following reasons :—First, because an implicit promise was made that it should be given ; secondly, because the Trial presents a remarkably interesting case of proof even to conviction elaborated from a series of circumstances and indirect evidences when placed in their due relations to each other ; and thirdly, because it exhibits a specimen of the mode according to which this Paper will in future state and arrange those cases in the civil or criminal jurisprudence of the country, where the evidence is intricate, or perplexed with details, and where the bearings and results consequently are not palpable to those who have little leisure to command."

Clearly about this period, De Quincey was labouring under the influence of Assizes on the brain, and the ghastly and gory nature of the news must have been appalling to sensitive and nervous readers. On August 22nd we find him, for example, again compelled to print, among others, the following apology :—

"The Editor owes an explanation to the gentleman who addressed a letter to him in his official character last week, from

Underbarrow ; immediately on its receipt, that letter was, in the technical language of the press, *composed* ; but was afterwards unavoidably excluded from that Number of the *Gazette*, in common with many other interesting articles, to make room for the last part of the Assize Report from Appleby—which did not reach the *Gazette* Office till nearly midnight on Friday. The Editor is too deeply sensible of the obligations to just and equal dealing imposed on him by his office, to have hesitated for one moment in allowing anyone an opportunity for temperately defending himself ; especially when answering a statement which had been introduced into this Paper under sanction of his own *imprimatur*. In the present case it is true that the author of the answer was the original assailant ; and the article, which he answered, no more than a rejoinder to one of his own ; but the original attack not having appeared in this Paper, it is also true that, as in respect to the Editor and *quoad hanc vicem*, the rejoinder was to be held the original step ; and accordingly the answer to it from Underbarrow would, as a matter of right, have appeared in this week's Paper, unless the author had himself thought fit to withdraw it from the *Gazette* Office.

“ ‘PHILADELPHUS ATLER,’ and ‘JUVENIS,’ are received, but, from their length, could not be inserted in this week's Paper ; an accumulation of other matter having obliged the Editor to postpone even the trial of the Godalming murderers, the evidence on which had been digested purposely for this Paper, with great care and labour, into a short but comprehensive abstract.”

The first hint of the development of the *Westmorland Gazette* into a cultured philosophical journal of the finest type, in fact of a type never dreamt of before by practical Editor or visionary *savant*, is to be found in a note in answer to a correspondent in the issue of September 12th. The writer in question appears to have been either a bit of a wag, or a simpleton, and it is not quite clear whether in the following notice De Quincey is fooling him to the top of his bent or trying to lure into the sacred Editorial arena a sage of Kirkby Thore :—

“The Editor cannot conclude without expressing his admiration of the facetiousness of the Kirkby Thore writer, when he assigns as a reason for re-printing in the *Chronicle* the article of the *Gazette* upon which he proposes to comment—that in that way only can the object of his strictures gain the publicity which

is necessary for his purpose. The Editor in return begs to assure that writer—1. That the audience, to which the *Gazette* speaks, is already a numerous one, and in the best sense a respectable audience :—That *it has increased and is increasing*, though the Kirkby Thore writer may choose to add "*and ought to be diminished*"; and *that* too since the Election, (which is possibly more than the *Chronicle* can assert);—3. That the Editor has means within his reach which will enable him still further to increase it ;—and 4. That among other persons whom he designs to add to his audience, is that constant reader of the *Chronicle* who dates from Kirkby Thore. He does not altogether despair of adding him to the number of his Correspondents ; but that he will have him among his Readers, the Editor is resolved : he grounds his determination in this point upon the fact (obvious to all who have read his preliminary letter in the *Chronicle*) that this constant reader is at any rate a person of education, and therefore cannot be supposed capable of resisting those spells of attraction lurking in the forthcoming Plan for improving and exalting the Paper into a philosophical Journal, by which the Editor will conjure him into the circle of his Readers. The development of this Plan has been hitherto of necessity delayed by the heavy pressure of Assize Reports. But the Assizes are drawing to a close : the promised Plan will soon be presented and thenceforwards the *Gazette* will have a constant reader at Kirkby Thore no less than the *Chronicle*."

The inconvenience of De Quincey residing at Dove Cottage and editing the *Gazette* in Kendal very soon begun to tell adversely to the interests of the paper and the convenience and mental comfort of the author. For instance I find in the issue of October 3rd, 1818, the following notice :—

"The Editor of the *Westmorland Gazette* had designed to notice the plan for the conduct of the war against the Lowthers proclaimed in the *Chronicle* of last week ; and had accordingly drawn up an article on the subject. But on reaching Kendal he found that the columns of the *Gazette* were almost entirely pre-occupied by other matter *which he had previously sent, &c.*" It will thus be seen that De Quincey did not possess, at least, one of the qualities of a good newspaper Editor ; he had but an imperfect idea of the relative value of different kinds of news, and was constantly engaged in the task of getting the quart measure into the pint

mug. We get a sad glimpse of one of De Quincey's recurring attacks of illness at this period in the following note on November 21st :—

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

“The Editor of the *Westmorland Gazette* has to lament that a painful indisposition for some weeks past, which has made the act of composition very distressing to him, has prevented him from fulfilling many engagements heretofore contracted to the Public generally, or to particular correspondents. In other respects (especially in the selection and preparation of the articles) he has not allowed any personal considerations to interfere with the laborious discharge of his duty to the Public.”

Another glimpse of our author, ill and confined to Dove Cottage, appears in a review of certain observations made by London papers on the political relationship between England and Prussia. The merits of the dispute is of no consequence here, but the following characteristic note is :—

“Writing in a situation of deep seclusion, and at a distance of eighteen miles from any town, we are obliged to discuss the question of date by a collation of probabilities for want of the requisite books which would have determined it in an instant : we may observe, however, that the London Papers in the midst of their redundant facilities for deciding the question in that way, have not argued it even on the probabilities nor on any more tenable ground than that of conjecture. With regard to the question of style,—we speak to *that* from a familiar knowledge of the language in which the letter was originally written ; to which knowledge the London Papers, by the vileness of their translations occasionally given from the German Papers, have apparently as slender pretensions as they have to any other knowledge becoming a gentleman—a scholar— or a philosopher.”

Here is a curious Editorial note on that vile compound known as “Potato-Brandy” :—

POTATO-BRANDY.

“‘An experimental philosopher’ (quære, an Exciseman ?), signing himself *Davus* in last week's *Kendal Chronicle* has by insinuation taxed the Editor of the *Gazette* with two errors in a short article relating to Potato Brandy formerly inserted in the *Gazette*. The errors are these: first, that he *has* misstated the specific gravity of Potato-Brandy; secondly, that he *may have* mistaken the

specific gravity for an expression of the strength of that spirit. The Editor of the *Gazette* has only a single moment left for saying that the article in question was not (as *Davus* chooses to suppose) written by himself, but adapted from the *Literary Gazette*—as many articles must be at times—without previous examination. On this explanation the Editor stands acquitted of any mistake real or pretended. Nevertheless, the Editor thinks it beneath him to lay claim to any knowledge which he has not ; and, with respect to the real mistake, he frankly acknowledges, therefore, that he does not know what is the specific gravity of Potato-Brandy ; *valeat quantum valere potest !* With respect to the second mistake, however, he must take the liberty of saying to *Davus*—that he shews a little iniquity, becoming the name he has assumed, in pretending to think that any part of the article implied such a mistake. If it had, the Editor repeats that he was not responsible for it. To his verbal criticisms *Davus* is not to expect any answer but this—*Ne Sutor ultra crepidam ;* let the exciseman confine himself to Potato-Brandy."

In a prodigiously long article, in reply to what appears to have been a series of savage attacks in the *Chronicle*, De Quincey, in the issue of December 26th, unsheathes his sword, throws away the scabbard, and descends into the controversial arena with the following preliminary flourish :—

"A newspaper is not like a book in its duration. Books are immortal ; for some of them last for ten or even fifteen years : but newspapers must content themselves with an existence almost literally ephemeral : a week is the term of their natural lives : and, of a newspaper exceeds that term, it may be said to have 'descended to posterity :' the readers of the second week are the posterity of a newspaper : after which they are not much heard of except by antiquarian trunk-makers and chandlers of eminent research.—On this consideration, the Editor of a newspaper must never stop hair-splitting in defence of his logic—or apologizing for his grammar and spelling. If he spells amiss one week, he must consult his spelling book and spell better the next. If the *Chronicle* knocks the *Gazette* down one week, the *Gazette* must get up and knock the *Chronicle* down the next. Motion and change of scene are the life of newspaper politics : there is no unpardonable crime but tediousness : and no sin, past benefit of clergy, but dulness : *that* Editor may be looked upon as a suspicious person who ever

gets as far in his divisions as 'fifthly;' indeed to divide at all may be accounted in him a misdemeanour; and to subdivide should not be held aailable offence.

"On this view of things, the Editor has forborne to attack many of his enemies. Some he may be supposed to have regarded as a lion reposing at his ease in a forest regards an ape making faces at him from the branch of a tree, whom he slights no less as beneath his prowess than as inaccessible to his attack: others again he may have regarded as a lion regards a tiger whom out of policy he avoids to combat so long as he can avoid it. One Kirkby-Thore indeed there was with whom he broke a lance; and occasionally he has skirmished a little with the Editor [or Editors—singular, dual, or plural] of the *Chronicle*. But in general, for the reasons he has assigned, he has shewn little of a fighting propensity. His instincts have been rather constructive than destructive; his aims rather to build up than to demolish. And even, when he *has* maintained a dispute, he has declined to pursue it further than was necessary to his immediate purpose: accordingly with the above Kirkby-Thore he did not think it incumbent upon him in a political dispute to pursue him into his metaphysical blunders (as in the use of the word '*ideal*,' &c.); not even though the said Bore (we would say, Thore) had unjustly grounded upon that very error of his own a charge of nonsense against the Editor. Latterly however the Editor has become sensible that he has been too merciful: mercy may be carried too far: and he has for some time seen clearly that he must make an example of some one or more of these *Chronicle* culprits. Accordingly he had at last determined that there should be immediately proclaimed a general gaol-delivery of all the felons, literary or political, that have yet appeared in the *Chronicle*; and a Session of Oyer and Terminer forthwith held for the trial of their several delinquencies. With this intention he had even drawn up the Calendar (containing the names of *Moderatus*—*Cærus*—*Davus*—and many others for whom justice gapes) when lo! in last Saturday's *Chronicle* forth step two great villains, greater than all the rest, of murderous aspects and incomprehensible wickedness. *Moderatus*, *Davus*, &c., are so many saints compared with these: they are accordingly all allowed to traverse to the next assizes: for the Editor is resolved straightway, and before he gets his breakfast to go to trial upon *Q in a*

corner and P. Q.—to find them both guilty—and to cut off both their heads with the same broad sword."

In another lengthy article he replies to the irritating Correspondent "Q in a Corner," whose contributions in the *Kendal Chronicle* appear to have acted upon De Quincey as the red flag infuriates the bull. "Q in a Corner," and another Correspondent "P. Q.," appear to have bantered De Quincey probably very savagely about his literary, scholastic, and "good breeding" pretensions, and dubbed him a "scurvy pedant," which was not polite, to say the least of it. Now, if there is one thing more characteristic of De Quincey's style than another it is its purity, its undefiledness, its perspicuity, vigour, and absolutely correct use of words in their true meaning. He labours to point out to his adversaries what he meant by "good breeding." In one of the attacks De Quincey is told in plain Saxon that he is "a low-bred mercenary adventurer, without previous education, without manners, and apparently, without conscience or moral principle : " all of which reads quite refreshing in the light of our knowledge of De Quincey's true, simple, and generous character, and his rare and scholarly accomplishments. The retort occupied nearly three long closely printed columns, but we have only space for the following passages. Taking the words quoted above as his text, he proceeds :—

"Now what is there in these words that has any reference either to the birth or to the rank of Editors? and yet P. Q. thinks it necessary to inform the Editor of the *Gazette* that a 'man's reputation does not depend on his *parentage*;' and both he and Q. ring changes upon the words aristocratical—patrician—arrogance, &c., &c., in a way which shews that both either do or affect to understand the word *low-bred*, as if it were synonymous with *low-born*. Was there ever ignorance equal to this in persons offering themselves to public notice as verbal critics? Q. and P. Q. are informed that whatever the word '*low-bred*' may be taken to signify in their clubs, it means at present (among people of education) *coarse-mannered*. In the 17th century the word breeding was always used as equivalent to the word bringing up (or education in the most comprehensive sense, i.e., culture not merely of the intellectual but of the moral faculties and the manners: 'Such a man,' for example, it was said, 'had his breeding at Oxford.' Throughout the 18th century 'it

had in general a more confined acceptance: it was used to denote manners, though still in a qualified way to denote them as the result of intercourse with polished society, and not as the result of native courtesy: thus, for example, when the Duke of Ormond is said by Dr. King (in his Anecdote lately published) to be the *highest bred* man in the Kingdom,—who but Q. and P. Q. understands anything else by that expression than that he was a man of the most refined manners of any in his day? By *Low-bred* therefore the Editor meant wanting in that sort of self-restraint which results from habitual communication with people of refined manners; that in this sense of the word many of the Public Journalists *are* low-bred, is a matter of notoriety; and in no instance has it been more illustrated than in their treatment of her late Majesty. But a still more important want is their want of education; and this want it was and not the want of rank and still less of high birth, upon which the Editor insisted as affecting their public relations injuriously. The fact, if it be one, is to the last degree important; and being so, it must be open to any man—more especially to a man himself deficient in no point of regular education—to fix the public attention upon it; and accordingly it is the design of the Editor to unfold this great national evil *more* fully and through the channel of a National Address. In the meantime, to protect his true meaning against that septuagint of misinterpreters who are always at work on his words in the pages of the *Chronicle*, the Editor begs to connect this general denunciation of the public journalists with its proper restrictions and qualifications. First, he does not mean to extend his charge to the London Press (especially the daily press) generally: some of the London weekly journalists are men of no education; but the proprietors of the daily papers (some of them in time of war have derived a clear income of £15,000 a year from the profits of a single paper) if not always themselves men of education, can easily obtain the assistance of Editors who *are*: and at any rate, when they are not men of regular education, the Editors of the daily papers are men of talent—and chosen on that account. Moreover, the daily papers of the Capital are enriched by frequent contributions from men of ability and various knowledge in all parts of the Empire. Together with much ignorance, therefore much error, and much base sentiment, the London papers disperse much important knowledge and many profitable suggestions.”

The concluding passages are as follows :—

“ Thus much in vindication of his charge against the public journalists generally, by way of freeing it from the misrepresentations sent abroad in the *Chronicle* with respect to himself as one of that body, the same explanation, which restores to its true shape what he said of others, restores to its just interpretation his temper in saying it—and rescues him from the charges of arrogance, &c., brought against him by Q. and P. Q. To justify him for remarking any want in others it is enough that he is not himself wanting in that point ; the deficiencies remarked were in education ; and Q. will not probably assert that he is deficient in any part of an English gentleman’s education.—Let it however be observed that he said nothing directly of his own education : but if he had, what vanity could there be in proclaiming an advantage which he shares with so many thousand Englishmen both professional and non-professional ? Or, even if the advantage had been a much rarer one, surely a good education is a subject for gratitude in that emphatical degree which makes it impossible for any but a thoughtless mind to regard it as a subject for pride. Besides that to have received the most expensive and elaborate education simply implies that opportunities for gaining knowledge have been had ; but not that the opportunities have been improved, or the knowledge gained. Or, if credit were taken not merely for the means but for the result—not merely for the education but for the knowledge, even in that case what feelings does the fact suggest to any mind not of inherent levity but (as he said before) gratitude for the past and responsibility for the future ? Looking backward, it expresses a burthen of blessings received ; looking forward, a burthen of duties contracted. But if in neglect of all that is here said, the Editor had proclaimed in the most ostentatious manner his own advantages in point of education, in what way has Q. met and repelled his supposed arrogance ? A rational man would suppose, by denying that he had enjoyed the advantages claimed. But instead of this Q. gives us a disparaging account of the Editor’s station in society : to say that the journalists have not had the benefits of education, and thus by implication to say of himself that he *has*, is (says Q.) ‘ridiculous vanity in so humble’—a what ? ‘in so humble a *scholar*,’ one might have expected in vulgar logic ; but, to our surprise the sentence ends—‘in so humble a *retainer of the aristocracy*.’ This is about as

rational as if in answer to a boast of exquisite skill in Greek a man should reply—'Pretty arrogance this in a man who is no more than a half-pay Lieutenant of marines!' Nevertheless,—however irrational Q.'s statement of the Editor's rank is in its position and as related to any thing either in Q.'s own paper or the one he was answering,—he would yet have forbore to notice it, if it had not contained (whether intentionally or not, is for the conscience of Q.) a *gross* violation of truth in a point of importance to the reputation of an obscure man, who is not yet sufficiently known in Westmorland to confide in his own character for the refutation of calumnious statements."

De Quincey could be as magnanimous as he was vigorous and uncompromising as a partizan. In the *Gazette* for January 16th, for instance, he makes the following curious and peculiarly gentlemanly apology:—

TO "Q. IN A CORNER."

"The Editor had drawn up a letter of apology to this writer for an unjust and intemperate expression which escaped him in reference to a passage relating to her Majesty, which it now appears that he had misinterpreted. But being too indistinctly written to be eligible at the press, it is of necessity delayed until next week. 'Q.' has himself taken no slight licence of sneer and even of misrepresentation: but that did not reconcile the Editor to an expression of anger and discourtesy which, if he had had time to read over his paper *once* before he sent it to press, he would certainly have cancelled as inconsiderate and unjust."

The year 1819 appears to have dawned in Kendal in a perfect whirlwind of political mud-slinging, and into the fray De Quincey plunged with all the ardour of his nature. On January 16th, he thus, in prominent type, proclaims

AN ACT OF OBLIVION.

"The Editor of the *Chronicle* has opened the new year with a proposal likely to be generally welcome to the County, by this time surfeited with electioneering politics, as it is suitable in temper and spirit to the season and the festival which is then commemorated. He proposes that an act of amnesty should be proclaimed by reciprocal consent of the parties in respect to all

past offences. The Editor of the *Gazette* will not hesitate on his part to meet these advances of the *Chronicle* in the same frank spirit of conciliation, and with the same sincerity which he trusts have suggested them to the opposite party ; and will contribute whatever a newspaper can contribute to the promotion and support of the amicable measure proposed. For the credit, however, of his own sincerity, and that he may not on the one hand bring *that* into question by appearing to pledge himself to more than he does actually consider himself pledged to do by this act, nor on the other hand fetter himself needlessly by renouncing any just licence of discussion or even of retrospection to past discussions beyond what is strictly implied in an act of amnesty,—he will take an early opportunity of marking with as much rigour of logic as may be the limits which to his judgment divides the privileges which he reserves from those which he renounces.—Meantime, as it would scarcely be fair suddenly and without previous notice to proclaim peace, and to deny all opportunity of turning out for another round, to those who may have supposed insults and grievances to retaliate, and considering that many men are of such temper that they will keep the peace more cordially and with more fidelity to their engagements if they are allowed full swing and license to their hostile feelings for one parting salute, he purposes to keep the *Gazette* open for three weeks to all combatants ; during which time (to use a nautical phrase) they may ‘ blaze away ’ at their enemies as hotly as they choose.”

Again, at the end of another prodigiously lengthy article, in which he rolls “ Q.,” “ Q. in a Corner,” and the *Kendal Chronicle* under his controversial harrow, he thus delivers himself :—

“ This was not just in ‘ Q. ’ : and other instances of equal misrepresentation the Editor might cite : but he forbears : and he forgives them all. And in return he hopes that Q. will consider him as now making the *amende honorable* for the angry expression applied to himself. Q. called the Editor arrogant — pedantic — silly—and half a hundred other names : the Editor said something like calling Q. a scoundrel. ‘ *De gustibus non est disputandum* : ’ but on the whole the Editor will willingly exchange titles with Q. —This is a fair exchange ; what Q. loses in weight he gains in tale. In the meantime, joking apart, the Editor formally retracts the word *scoundrelism* ; wishes it unsaid ; and he begs of Q. to use

the weight which he must naturally have with the *Chronicle* for getting it included in the meditated act of amnesty."

There is a glimpse into the domestic circle of Dove Cottage, under peculiar circumstances. In the *Gazette* for January 30th De Quincey writes :—

"On Thursday night, January 28th, an accident occurred at the house of Mr. De Quincey in Grasmere, which providentially terminated without injury to any of the family. Between one and two o'clock Mr. De Quincey was sitting up and writing : in a single moment a volume of smoke passed between him and his paper so suddenly as to darken it in one instant as much as if the candles had been extinguished. On looking round to the fire, nothing was at first seen ; but in half a minute a great fork of flames, extending to a place about four feet distant, sprung out from a crevice in one side of the grate. The rest of the family, who were then asleep, were called up ; and though only women, shewed so much presence of mind, that in half-an-hour (water being at hand) the fire was extinguished. On tearing down the mantelpiece and unfixing the grate, it was found that—the back-plate of the grate having in a course of ten years receded from the side parts—space had been allowed for the contents of the grate to fall into a cavity beneath the 'hobs :' these droppings had probably accumulated for a long time in an ignited state : for the timbers about the fireplace, which were very old, were discovered to be eaten into with fire, and glowing brightly to a depth of two-and-a-half feet within the wall.—The family were thankful that one of their number was sitting up, for within half an inch of the place whence the first flames sprang out, and separated only by the side of a bookcase, stood a collection of books, and the room being strewed on that evening with newspapers and the timbers of the house all old, there was little doubt that in ten minutes the fire would have been inextinguishable in a place so remote from fire engines : and in that case it would have been very difficult for part of the family to escape, the windows being cottage windows and allowing no egress.—It is remarkable that, about nine hours before the accident, one of the family said she thought she saw a light in the crevice between the grate and the bookcase ; but, upon examining, this was over-ruled and pronounced to be a reflection from the fire upon a bright mantelpiece ; and it was not afterwards remembered until the fire broke out."

For a month De Quincey busied himself with a series of most elaborate articles on "The resumption of cash payments by the Bank of England," but these will be dealt with as shortly as possible in another part of this pamphlet. On February 6th, 1819, Wordsworth addresses the following valuable communication to De Quincey, and it is now given as an interesting link between the two distinguished men and their connection with the *Westmorland Gazette*, in the columns of which several of Wordsworth's poems originally appeared:—

To the Editor of the Westmorland Gazette.

SIR,—Having observed three original Sonnets of mine announced as making part of the contents of the last number of Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, you will oblige me by reprinting them in your journal from my own M.S. in which they have undergone some alteration since they were presented by me to Mr. Westall, with liberty to make what use of them he thought proper.

I am, sir, respectfully yours,

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Rydal Mount, Feb. 3rd, 1819.

SONNETS

SUGGESTED BY MR. W. WESTALL'S VIEWS OF THE CAVES, ETC.,
IN YORKSHIRE.

Pure element of waters ! wheresoe'er
Thou dost forsake thy subterranean haunts,
Green herbs, bright flowers, and berry-bearing plants
—Rise into life and in thy train appear :
And, through the sunny portion of the year
Swift insects shine, thy hovering pursuivants :
And, if thy bounty fail, the forest pants ;
And hart and hind and hunter with his spear
Languish and droop together. Nor unfelt
In man's perturbed soul thy sway benign :
And, haply, for within the marble belt
Of central earth, where tortured spirits pine
For grace and goodness lost, thy murmers melt
Their anguish—and they blend sweet songs with thine.*

* Waters (as Mr. Westall informs us in the letterpress prefixed to his admirable views) are invariably found to flow through these caverns.

GORDALE.

At early dawn—or rather when the air
Glimmers with fading light, and shadowy eve
Is busiest to confer and to bereave,—
Then, pensive Votary, let thy feet repair
To Gordale-chasm, terrific as the lair
Where the young lions couch ;—for so, by leave
Of the propitious hour, thou mayst perceive
The local Deity, with oozy hair
And mineral crown, beside his jagged urn
Recumbent :—Him thou mayst behold, who hides
His lineaments by day, and there presides,
Teaching the docile waters how to turn
Or, if need be, impediments to spurn
And force their passage to the salt sea tides.

MALHAM COVE.

Was the aim frustrated by force or guile
When giants scoop'd from out the rocky ground
—Tier under tier—this semicirque profound?
(Giants—the same who built in Erin's Isle
That causeway with incomparable toil !)
O had this vast theatric structure wound
With finished sweep into a perfect round,
No mightier work had gained the plausible smile
Of all beholding Phœbus ! But alas !
Vain earth, false world !—Foundations must be laid
In heav'n ; for mid the wreck of IS and WAS,
Things incomplete and purposes betrayed
Make sadder transits o'er truths mystic glass
Than noblest objects utterly decayed.

The following, Mr Editor, suggested during one of the most awful of the late storms, is at your service, as a small acknowledgment for your civility, should you think proper to insert the foregoing.

SONNET.

One, who was suffering tumult in his soul,
Yet failed to seek the sure relief of prayer,
Went forth—his course surrendering to the care
Of the fierce wind, while mid-day lightnings prowled
Insiduously,—untimely thunders growl,—
While trees dim-seen in frenzied numbers tear
The lingering remnant of their yellow hair,—
And shivering wolves, surpris'd with darkness, howl
As if the sun were not ;—he lifted high
His head—and in a moment did appear
Large space, mid dreadful clouds, of purest sky,
An azure orb—shield of tranquility,
Invisible unlook'd for Minister
Of providential goodness ever nigh !

During the month of February there raged a perfect tea-pot storm between the two local Editors over the circulation of the respective papers. The following forms part of a lengthy retort on the part of De Quincey, which is at least curious and characteristic of the man.

" . . . Without further inquiry we may be assured that neither paper has a large circulation in the county—nor can have. Out of the county it might be possible indeed, with certain means at its disposal, for any paper to command almost any circulation : what these means are we shall have occasion to say on a future occasion.—For the present we shall content ourselves with saying that the Editor's personal friends, in the three chief Universities of Great Britain and in that of Dublin, as well as in many other great cities, will always give him the means (if he had no better means) of obtaining a very considerable circulation for the *Westmorland Gazette* if he should think it fit to call upon his friends

for that testimony of friendship. In the meantime we are assured that all those who have any gentlemanly feelings among the opposite party will disapprove of so brutal an expression of vulgar insolence as this everlasting triumph of the *Chronicle* (without any proof alleged) in a supposed superiority to the *Gazette* in extent of circulation. If the *Chronicle* insinuates that a larger circulation is a proof of greater merit, then at least it should be left for others to say. If it is not the demerits but the misfortune of the *Gazette* to be (as it alleged) below the *Chronicle* in circulation — then it proves nothing : and it is pretty much like the ignoble triumph of uneducated persons in a full purse. But this subject we have said more about than it deserved. As to the rest of the *Chronicle's* coxcombry — we are well content that an article of ours should be thought dull by a writer whose censure confers honour. We are content even occasionally to be thought dull by better judges. For after all dulness is a crime, which though of great magnitude does occasionally beset us all : if not by our own fault, at any rate by the fault of our subject. “*Hanc veniam petumisque damusque vicissim.*”

On April 17th De Quincey makes this Editorial announcement :—

“Next week the Editor of the *Gazette* will make a communication to the public which, to the higher class of readers, cannot fail to be interesting.”

This great manifesto, however, did not appear on the 24th, but in its stead an announcement that the Editor was engaged composing it, and a promise of publication on May 1st. It did not appear even on that day, but on May 8th, and here it is in all its grandiosity and pomp of *promise* :—

COMMUNICATION TO THE READERS OF THE “WESTMORLAND
GAZETTE.”

[N.B.—This communication was delayed for one week after it was promised by want of room, and for a second week by an accidental failure of catching the post at a distance of four miles.]

“The Editor of the *Westmorland Gazette* purposes to substitute, for the extracts hitherto made from a literary Journal of the Metropolis, a class of articles which will give to the *Gazette* an

interest and a character of originality scarcely claimed by any English Journal even exclusively devoted to literature. Hitherto, upon an average, perhaps, two and three columns alternately out of twenty (or five every fortnight) have been occupied by miscellaneous articles extracted from the *Literary Gazette*. Without making any charge for the present in the proportions of the paper (which he does not feel disposed to do without express warrant from the Proprietors), — and assuming therefore that two columns and a half are disposable in every week for the business of a literary and philosophical journal, — he designs to fill that space with four classes of articles, viz. I. With Statistical Tables — British and Continental.—II. With Original Essays.—III. With a Horilegium collected from the most unfrequented parts of European Literature (especially English).—IV. And chiefly with translations from the best parts of German Literature, and more rarely from the German Philosophy.

I. The Editor believes that in London a journal, occupied exclusively with statistics, would have very great success. The tables for this country will be printed from the Reports of the House of Commons—from those of the Agricultural Society, &c. Those for the Continent will be extracted from works of analogous authority in the French language (for France), and in the German language (for the rest of Europe).

II. The subjects of the essays are likely to attract notice from their novelty; and a list of about nine or ten will be published next week.

III. This class will admit none but such articles as appear to come under these two conditions; first, that they shall be of extraordinary interest; secondly, that they shall from their situation appear to be of little notoriety. The second condition will not be thought realized, unless the article proposed for admission shall stand either first in a book of very ancient date, or secondly in a modern book of unusually high price, or thirdly, in a book of vast extent (such as the various collections of State papers—National Archives and Monuments, Antiquarian, Diplomatic, &c.—the old Chronicles of the different European nations—or generally any extensive Corpus of materials whatsoever, such as the Byzantine History—the Greek and Latin Fathers—the *Acta Sanctorum*—the collections of Muratori—the English State Trials—the French Collection of Memoirs,

&c., &c.) ; or fourthly, in a book which from its general subject appears to have been very little read — or which appears, from having never reached a second edition (whether otherwise fitted or not for popularity), to have been in fact but little read.

IV. Upon this class it is that the Editor peremptorily challenges for the literary journal which he now announces an originality and a depth of interest superior to that which any English Journal whatsoever can claim. The German literature is in certain classes the most opulent in Europe. It is a perfect Potosi : and the English nation have as yet imported nothing but the coarsest part of the ore. In Poetry and the finer and more spiritual parts of literature, the merit of the Germans is generally overrated, certainly very much overrated, by themselves. Goëthe for instance, is that one among their own poets whom they most idolize. His closest English representative is perhaps Walter Savage Landor — a man of transcendant genius. And most unquestionably, in a degree of power, the German poet is immeasurably below the English ; though in kind, as we have said, more frequently than any other English writer reflecting the characteristics of Goëthe. Again, try the pretensions of the German poetry in the persons of Schiller, Wieland, or Burger ; and it must be admitted that on comparison with some English writers of modern times, even they all appear utterly contemptible, even Schiller's fine drama of Wallenstein, as it appears in its English dress, is indebted for all its splendours to the admirable genius of its translator, Coleridge ; It is very fit that Madame de Stael's friend Schlegel, who thinks Ossian a great poet, should think his own countrymen also great poets (and himself probably among the number) an Englishman, who has formed his judgment in that matter from the mighty writers of England, must have leave to differ with Mr. Schlegel. It is fit also that the same Mr. Schlegel, who was incapable of reading any philosophic work, should take upon him to criticise the great author of the modern German philosophy. But an Englishman, who knows the infirmity of his own literature, must acknowledge that in all branches of philosophy, not England only, but all Europe, ought to yield the precedency to the Germans. It is in this department of intellectual power, in various branches of science, in historical documents and archives, and universally in all inquiries which demand very

patient and elaborate research that Germany is eminent — and eminent above all competition from either ancient or modern times. It is from these departments of German literature that the Editor will draw his materials. The reader need not however fear that he will be oppressed by German metaphysics: reverence for the illustrious founder of the great modern metaphysical system — would of itself prevent him from bringing forward in a fugitive work any exposition of that vast creation of human intellect. In the philosophical department he does not design to go beyond the shorter essays in which popular applications are attempted of philosophical principles to questions of politics — legislation — ethics — conduct of the understanding — education, &c., &c. In general it will be his object to give something of unity to the four different departments of his journal by directing them all into a common service ministerial to the purposes of a wise and enlightened patriotism. Very rarely he designs to introduce essays upon the sublimer parts of Physics; as for example, the *Universal Theory and Natural History of the Heavens* by Immanuel Kant. But for the most part he will confine himself to those parts of the German literature which have a moral interest. A further notice will be given next week. ”

The “further notice” promised on May 8th for “next week” really never appeared, and the brief Editorial announcements made from time to time until De Quincey terminated his connection with the *Gazette* reveal a growing spirit of friction between him and his employers, and a great irritation of temper which show how his troubles as Editor became greatly aggravated as weeks and months rolled on. On May 29th he publishes the following programme: but of course it never was adhered to:—

“NOTICE.—The Editor will open the Journal of which he formerly gave notice on Saturday, June 12th: the first number will contain the following articles:—1. Immanuel Kant of England, or a letter to a friend on the study of Transcendental Philosophy; with some account of the English Expounders—The Edinburgh Review, Mr. Coleridge, and others.—2. Mode of valuing Money in the Continental Mints.

The second number will contain:—Hints towards a history of gold and silver. 2. The Planet Uranus.—3. Memorabilia from the Pocket Book of a Scholar.

The third number will contain :—1. An analysis of Two Essays by Wolf and Kant on the introduction of mathematical conceptions into philosophy. 2. Earthquake.

In the issue for July 31st occurs the following curious announcement :—

"The Editor has received a letter dated July 14—from a Proprietor of the *Westmorland Gazette*. To this letter he would willingly have paid the attention which is due to the character and station of the writer and his relation to the Paper, in the number immediately succeeding : but circumstances which are of no public interest have put it out of his power for some weeks back to attend with sufficient zeal and exertion to his public duties. Next week, however, he purposes to notice it fully."

Of course no such answer appeared, and up to the end of November, when De Quincey finally ceased to be Editor he appears to have done very little regular work for the paper.

This is the last "Editorial Note" we find from De Quincey in the columns of the *Westmorland Gazette* for November 27, 1819:

"If 'Serena' had lived in the days of *Sternhold* and *Hopkins* he (we believe the author is of masculine gender) might probably have acquired the name of a Poet : but his total neglect both of number and harmony renders his effusions altogether unfit for admission into the *Gazette*."

POLITICAL.

The political circumstances under which De Quincey became Editor of the *Westmorland Gazette* have already been explained, and in reproducing some specimens of his controversial methods and style it will only be necessary to make few and short explanatory observations. The first article, dated June 20, 1818, deals with Brougham's "public entry into Kendal" on June 10th and the speech he delivered on that occasion. The article *per se* is good of its kind, but does not lend itself to quotation. About this period the columns of the *Gazette* began to teem with anonymous contributions of a highly spiced order, and there is no doubt but many of these were from the pen of our author. Wordsworth also contributed frequently to the columns of the *Gazette*, under the signature of *Philadelphus*, but it would be useless to deal with these except in the way of explanation of De Quincey's political philosophisings. Sometimes in his more elaborate political "essays," as he termed his Editorial articles, we find De Quincey soaring into the realms of the wildest philosophical speculations. In an article in the issue of July 11th, for instance, exulting over the defeat of Brougham and the triumph of the Lowther family, he indulges in the following strain:—

"In every view the contest has been of paramount rank, and by no means to be confounded with an ordinary dispute between Whig and Tory. The root and principle of the contest lay far deeper; it touched upon whatever was cardinal and of foremost concern in the frame and constitution of society.—In Westmorland, as on a miniature stage, was rehearsed that great drama which, there is reason to fear, from the pestilent activity of the Jacobinical press, and the ferocious energy of the Jacobinical factions, will one day be acted in larger proportions, upon the great theatre of the Empire: and if we should not pay too high a compliment to the entire Empire, by supposing Westmorland no more than its adequate representative in point of knowledge, and of political virtue; then we cannot pay a higher compliment

to the Electors of Westmorland, than by saying that every English patriot will have reason to be abundantly satisfied, in contemplation of that great and hypothetical contest, if the issue in *that* should appear to him (as to completeness and the other circumstances of a perfect triumph) probably prefigured in the issue of *this*."

On August 28th, we find De Quincey expounding his views on Royalty, in relation to national expenditure. It appears from the article that the local Radical paper was of opinion that not less than nine personages of the Royal Family of England "were pensioners on the National Bounty to the amount of £350,000 annually, who were nevertheless so far insensible to the claims of patriotism and to common equity as to spend the whole of the revenue in foreign countries." With this capital charge was connected a second, subordinate to the first,—viz., "that the present scarcity of gold coinage is owing to a demand among the Royal Emigrants for sovereigns, with which it is alleged the Bank furnishes them, to the prejudice of the national interest, and with the effect of raising their value to 22 shillings each." The Radical writer's general conclusion is that "it is the rigid duty for those Royal persons to stop at home and maintain the happiness and interest of a nation on the preservation of the constitution of which they are absolutely dependent for *food and raiment*." The following is De Quincey's reply :—

DEFENCE OF ROYALTY.

"We would wish to fix our readers' eye upon the last words of the sentence, which ascribe to the Royal House of England a state of abject dependency, for the supply of the lowest physical necessities, upon the bounty of the English people. If this were true, there would be no need that we should wait for the ruin of the constitution to find our Royal Family degraded. If they are paupers by necessity, and stipendiaries by sufferance, as they are here represented, they are already degraded. On this view of things the King is a pensioner of his own footmen; our naval and military commanders are beneficiaries of their own boat-swains and corporals; and the Judge is a debtor to the criminal upon whom he is passing sentence. But God be thanked, for the dignity of Government as involved in the persons of those who compose it, and for the interests of society as rooted in that

dignity, the case is far otherwise. National property is not held as it is here insinuated. The claims of the State are not petitionary and mendicant, nor are its revenues eleemosynary. The claims of the State are peremptory and paramount, without limit, without bar, without condition. The revenue of the Government is theirs not by formal transfer, by technical acts of alienation, or by any secondary or derivative tenure; it is theirs originally and transcendently: it is theirs in defiance of the nominal proprietor. The nominal proprietor (who is so virtually in relation to any private claimant) has no charter for himself but from the State. It is true that the State does sometimes, by its own act on this point, limit its own sovereignty; for the convenience of society, it places itself in some cases upon the footing of an ordinary creditor. But such acts on the part of the State respect what it leaves: that, which it takes, it takes by no specific act, but by a right antecedent to the possibility of any act or individual law; that is to say, by the right inherent in it as a state and implied in its bare existence as such: such a right is of its essence, and not among its accidents, or the variable parts of its prerogation. We find accordingly that even a Jacobin will not pretend that he can fix *a priori* any limits to the just demands of the State: even he will admit that the limits are determinable only *a posteriori*, and by the expediency of the case: which is an admission of the plenary rights of the Government over all property. This being so, we may conclude that those are to be held in the highest sense as disorganizers of Society, who presume to affirm that the lowest pensioner of the State for the lowest services *a fortiori* than the supreme magistrate and his family, are debtors for any part of their revenue to the nation as individuals: to the ideal person of the State they are all debtors, and for every kind of service: under many relations indeed, all of us, pensioned and unpensioned, are indebted by manifold ties to the State: and for the illustrious persons whose names are connected with the question here touched, we trust it will be found in the end, that they are incapable of taking any circumstances or peculiarity of situation, as constituting for them a dispensation from those civic duties to which they in a more emphatical manner are bound by the extraordinary munificence of the State manifested in the provision made for upholding the rights and dignity and splendor of their August House."

On November 17th, 1818, after a protracted and severe illness, Queen Charlotte, Consort of George III., died at Kew Palace, and the event afforded De Quincey an opportunity of discussing at length what we would now regard as the interdependent relationship between the Crowned Head and the people. On December 12th, he published a lengthy article headed, "Her Late Majesty," but there is very little in it about the Queen. It is in some parts a fierce political tirade, and a refutation of the "lying slanders of the Jacobinal press" in their attacks on the Royal Family. "In general," wrote De Quincey, "the editors of newspapers are low-bred mercenary adventurers, without manners, without previous education, and apparently without conscience, or moral principle. They are servile to the public feeling, according to their conception of it; and that conception is derived from their own experience of life, lying originally among the needy and discontented;—not seldom from a constitution of mind predisposing them to meanness and ignoble sentiment, and from habits and education tending to confirm it." That is a pretty fair specimen of De Quincey's mode of treating his political adversaries. At that period, on various important questions, the *Times* did not side with the party in office, and on the Corn Laws question it greatly irritated our author, who accused the Editor of being inspired by "drunken fervour." But, to return to De Quincey's defence of Royalty, we reproduce the following from a fervide and rather discursive article, in which special reference is made to the then political situation as far as the conduct of the Regent, afterwards George IV., affected it. In the *Gazette* of December 12th, 1818, De Quincey wrote as follows:—

"We all know in what manner the Regent has been hunted and baited by the newspapers. The origin of this abuse was in the mortification and disappointment of the Fox and Grenville parties upon finding that their abject prostration to Napoleon Bonaparte, and the cowardly act of perfidy which they meditated to the cause of Human Nature at that time identified with the Peninsular war, had excluded them from all chance of participation in the executive government: this was its origin: but it has since been adopted by the Jacobinism of the nation; and from that spirit has borrowed an activity and contagiousness which it could not have had so long as it was a mere expression of disappointed self-interest proceeding from a coalition that had fallen

into utter contempt. With what effect it had been dispersed through the nation we may find from this fact — that men of the best dispositions to the present civil establishment and to the person of the King do not scruple daily in public convivial parties to express the utmost disrespect to the Regent : from the mere existence of his disrespect some will infer its justification : but the true inference is — that the press has exerted a daily influence to impress a feeling of disrespect, to which influence men are generally almost passive and surrender themselves almost unconsciously. That this *is* the true inference will appear from a single question, which will probably startle those who are in the habit of borrowing their feelings irreflectively from newspapers : — what public charge (for with his private character, as most of us cannot be much acquainted, so we have none of us any right to concern ourselves) what public charge—we do not say true but even false or of any kind — is there before the nation, or has there been affecting the character of the Regent ? What fact has been, or can be adduced, which exhibits him to any disadvantage in his civil character under a comparison with the King his father ? His Majesty it is the cant of jacobinism for its own present purposes to applaud : now the main political act of the Regent (so far as we know, the *only* act purely his own) was the election of war at the crisis offered in the political demise of the King : and in that act, it will scarcely be denied, that he pursued the intentions and policy of the King ; as also that he brought those intentions to their final triumphant consummation. Yet under this total absence of all distinct charge against the Regent ; we daily hear the insolence of the jacobinical press in relation to his Royal Highness echoed by men who applaud the main course of his policy ; and, from this thoughtlessness combined with some cowardly feelings, it has come to be held unpatriotic and a dereliction of independence and public spirit to speak in respectful language of the present Supreme Magistrate of this nation. This is one and a lively instance of the mighty evil acting upon the English people from a Press tainted with ignoble and plebian feeling and carried on to a sure attainment of its aims by the immense diffusion given to its unhappy influence. But another and still more striking instance has been recently furnished in connexion with the discussion of her late Majesty's character. We shall not give further circulation to the base and atrocious sentiments avowed by many

journals, nor shall we disgust our readers, by citing any part of them : but we refer to them for the sake of introducing one remark which is extorted from us in sorrow and in fearful anticipation of the consequences which it involves : — it is quite manifest that in some classes of society a great revolution has been wrought in the national character. In a periodical literary journal of great circulation and conducted with distinguished ability (*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*) it was made matter of just reproach to Mr. Moore (the erotic poet) that he had been guilty of a cowardly and unmanly act in his licentious invectives against the Regent inasmuch as the object of his attack was placed in a station which denied him all power of retaliation or of inflicting the chastisement which usually awaits such public insults. This argument could not but appeal to the *human* feelings of him who as a citizen might choose to disclaim all reverence to the Regent in his character of Magistrate. We need not point out the distinctions which make this argument still more cogent as transferred to the case of her Majesty. She was the supreme gentlewoman of Christendom : she had therefore the same privilege of station, as excluding all possibility of retaliation which had been noticed in the case of the Regent : she had moreover the privilege of sex. These privileges from insult she had when living. She is now privileged by the grave : at which point the enmities of the generous are arrested — even when directed against the vilest criminal. But in opposition to the outrages of the jacobinical press no privileges have any force or sanctity. And accordingly her Majesty's character, even up to the inscrutable question of her motives and intentions, has been racked and tortured with a lawlessness of malignity and a contempt of truth and common decency which have not yet been paralleled even in America or revolutionary France. That this can have been tolerated by the public feeling — is of bad omen for England, and carries with it a weight of prophetic meaning. That a single individual should have been basely traduced, even though that individual be the Queen of Great Britain in her dying moments, is comparatively of light importance : but that a signal decay of generosity and honorable sentiment should have been affected in the national character—is a subject of sorrowful presage for the future welfare of the land. False principles, and erroneous maxims, may be extirpated by force of argument or by a practical refutation of

experience : they are moreover oftentimes more effects, and terminate in themselves : but feelings and sentiments (that is, thoughts impregnated with feeling) are causative, diffusive, contagious, and vital : a people, once vitiated in the sources of honorable feeling, and the capacity of generous sympathy, must be in a state of moral declension which implies an approaching decay of political grandeur. — For principles in themselves are inert : but national feeling is the power by which only a people can be predisposed to bad principles, or by which good ones can be made operative."

De Quincey frequently breaks out in eloquent defence of the Throne. In the issue for June 5th, 1819, we find him, for instance, thus dealing briefly with a recurring event sadly marred on that occasion by the mental helplessness of the aged monarch :

"Yesterday, our aged Sovereign completed his eighty-first year. After a retrospective view of the stupendous events in the History of Europe—the conquest of our arms, and the triumphant issue of a sanguinary war—events which have taken place since reason and recollection ceased to operate upon his mind—what Englishman does not devoutly wish that he who is "King of Kings" would

————— vouchsafe one ray divine
To his forlorn condition, —————
Tho' were it only for a moment's space,

—at the latest hour in the eventide of life re-kindle in his soul the light of reason, and enable him to contemplate the events of the latter times !—What mingled emotions of joy and grief would fill his mind ! His armies have been victorious—his Kingdom has received glory and honour—but, the affectionate partner of his throne is returned to the dust !—his beloved Princess—the desire of the nation—is silent in the tomb !—Would he, like the Hebrew, who, when calamities befel her land, in the pangs of death, called her unhappy offspring by the name of Ichabod, take up a bitter lamentation and say — '*The glory is departed from England!*' ? No ! like the aged Simeon in the language of adoration, he would say, — '*Let my soul depart in peace, for I have seen the salvation of my people!*' — The anniversary was observed in this town with the usual demonstrations of loyalty : the bells rung at intervals during the day, and the Corporation and principal gentlemen of the town met at the Commercial Inn in the evening, to testify their respect to our venerable King."

CHARLES JAMES FOX AND HIS PARTY.

In a very elaborate article on May 29th, 1819, De Quincey reviews the "State of the Nation," and takes a retrospective glance at the career of Charles Fox and the fate of the Fox party. Referring casually to the character of the first Lord Holland, which he declares was "not English" and highly unpopular (among the Tories of those days), he points out that prejudice "soon relented before the splendid powers of Charles Fox. * * * At a boyish age we may affirm that Charles Fox was popular." He then proceeds to answer the question—"How came it that he and his party, composed of so many brilliant men, have since become so irredeemably unpopular, that no changes of public affairs have ever restored them to national favour"? Chiefly, as he contends, from three causes, as thus expounded:—

"1. The first great shock given to the reputation of the Fox party was its coalition with the party of Lord North. During the reign even of Charles the Second there had been no case of equal public profligacy. Of all the graces which can adorn and recommend a public disputant, that which is most effectual to win esteem and to disarm opposition is the grace of sincerity and zeal. To see a man earnestly contending for what he believes to be the truth is always an effecting spectacle: and we are all ready to pardon, on the single consideration that he is in earnest, much of intemperance — much anger — much ignorance — much even of error. Liberties, which we should else repel with indignation, we tolerate by way of doing homage to the spirit of conscientious zeal which we believe to prompt them. To be in earnest in short and deeply in earnest so as to forget one self and to be swallowed up in the single consideration of the truth, is the most potent and captivating eloquence. Commensurate with the love we bear to sincerity is the reaction of disgust upon finding that we have been duped by counterfeit semblances of sincerity. Of this disgust the Fox party upon the coalition with their opponents became the immediate object: and the consequences were the more fatal, because those were the most deeply offended who had given their warmest sympathies to that party, and because the offence was not of a nature to be healed, all manifestations of zeal and generous warmth seeming afterwards in that party but a subtler hypocrisy. What little character the party might have left was sacrificed in its second apostacy when it coalesced with the

Grenvilles. Indeed by that time the Fox party had sunk so low in the public opinion, that it was upon the infatuated partners in its guilt that the weight of public indignation settled: to the Grenvilles it was fatal, and to all their hopes of future popularity; for they had slight talents to depend upon, and rested only upon the opinion held of their integrity. On the triple brass of the Foxites all moral indignation it was felt would be flung away.

"2. The second cause of the unpopularity of the Fox party will be found in the dissoluteness of life and morals which characterised its most conspicuous members. This is a grave charge, and not easily discussed in our days. For its truth however we appeal to the recollections connected with the private history of Devonshire house, and to the whole tenor of private anecdote. Among the most distinguished members of the party there was a general licentiousness of opinion and of action; a disregard of external decorum; and a recklessness even of appearances. No sacrifices were made to the institutions of the land; none to place and authorised dignity; none to the temper of the English people. The vices of the opposition, as they were of foreign growth, put on for the most part a face of foreign audacity. On this head, however, it is for the next age to speak more plainly.

"3. But that which eclipsed all other offences of the Fox party,—that which is the main cause of its unpopularity and which has made its unpopularity hopeless and immedicable—is its total want of patriotic feeling and its habit of sympathising with the worst enemies of England. Here lay the consummation and the crown of all its offences. The two former blots upon its escutcheon might possibly have been washed out: much may be effected with the lower classes, and with all classes something, by a fervent concern for the national welfare, and never was there such an opportunity presented to any party of redeeming its former offences in the opinion of its country as was offered to the Fox party in 1803 on the opening of the war with Bonaparte. By that time the course of events had united the patriotic all over the world: and to men of all parties, who had any eye to the public good, there was no course left but one. The voice of duty left nothing to the deliberative will of the individual, but imposed upon all men a stern monotony of principle and of conduct. The Fox party, however, which had always shewed a bluntness of sensibility in relation to what affected the national honour or welfare, grew

colder in their patriotism as the appeals to their patriotism became more urgent and passionate. About the beginning of the Peninsular war in 1808, when a last golden opportunity, was offered to that party of recantation, its sympathy with France became keener than most men's patriotism. At this time the cause of England, from being the cause of Europe, had been exalted into the cause of human nature. At the same time and in due proportion to the exaltation of the cause, did the rancorous hatred of it increase among the Foxites : their leader was now dead : but his spirit still reigned amongst them, or a spirit equally estranged from all magnanimous feeling. Before this time, it had shocked all men of English feelings to see an English duchess connected with the Fox party (herself a woman originally of amiable nature) cherishing and patronising all manner of French vermin—carrying about, for instance, a hound (Gen. Boyer) who publicly boasted in every English company that with ten thousand Frenchmen he would take military possession of England ; whilst the polite Foxites stood by and listened—and, instead of braining him with an English fan, bowed and admitted that his arguments were very plausible. It had shocked all true Englishmen to see that the *Morning Chronicle*, the official paper of the party, was the unfailing champion of whatsoever was French—the apologist of French atrocities, and the asserter of French rights and honors. But it now became still more shocking to see that, within the very walls of parliament, Bonaparte and the French nation had partizans who could not have served them more faithfully and zealously if they had been regularly bribed. It now became a passion with the Fox party and to their everlasting infamy (with the Grenvilles no less) to serve and pay homage to Bonaparte. Some there were in both parties who resented any words of disrespect to Bonaparte as a personal affront to themselves. All of them to the extent of their power laid a weight upon the exertions of the country : all prophesied ill to England : all found it difficult to conceal their exultation at the approach of any national disaster : all were afflicted at the humiliation of Bonaparte, and mourned on his final discomfiture as under a private calamity. But we need not retrace circumstantial the conduct of the Fox party—which, as proceeding from Englishmen, it can but afflict an Englishman to remember or think of as a possibility. We have sufficiently pointed out the

grounds on which we believe the Fox party to have forfeited its popularity. These grounds lie too deep for any chance that in this generation it should retrieve its reputation. The merits of the present ministry, and their popularity, rest upon a polar opposition of principles and of conduct; more especially with respect to the grand cause at stake in the last war. In relation to *that*, their services have been infinite and can never be forgotten. It is upon these *retrospective* claims of the ministers that we ground our respect for them and our indisposition to the cause of their opponents. This view of politics leaves us an ample latitude of dissent and disapprobation as regards the *present* conduct of ministers, when their measures are to be tried by another standard than in time of war: but, under any call for dissent or even for disapprobation, this view of politics entails upon us a never-ending debt of gratitude to the present ministry for having hoped well and for having animated the hopes of Europe during a season of darkness,—and for having conducted these hopes by wisdom and great energy to their final glorious consummation."

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION.

De Quincey fought the battle of the Tory party on the Catholic Emancipation question with more than customary zeal, and, bearing in mind the direct and indirect fruits of that great and wise measure, his controversial writings cannot be unearthed with any degree of credit to his genius, his political prescience, or his political charity. From quite a plethora of articles on the subject we take the following succinct statement of his general views on the question. The extract forms part of a lengthy reply to an anonymous correspondent "J. S."

"Burke, for instance, maintained the claims of the Roman Catholics in his days: but what were those claims? Far short of those which they now advance; nay! they were simply such as have now been for some time conceded to the Catholics. (See his letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, &c.) 5. When he uses the terms '*regain liberties*,' '*persecution*,' '*bigotry*,' &c., he does in fact assume the whole matter in dispute. We are all agreed that the Catholics should be allowed their just '*liberties*': but we deny that their liberties are withheld from them. We are all agreed that '*persecution*' and '*bigotry*' are very bad things: but we deny that we persecute the Catholics by denying them certain privileges; and we deny that there is any '*bigotry*' in

refusing political power to the Catholics, so long as they profess civil doctrines such as they do profess. Their rights and liberties are as well secured as our own, and better than those of Protestants in any Catholic country in the world. But every State has a right to provide for its own safety by excluding those from power whose political principles are hostile to her interest."

THE PETERLOO MASSACRE.

De Quincey took an equally decided Tory view of the Game Laws, the Corn Laws, and cognate questions. All politicians are now agreed that the "Peterloo Massacre," in Manchester, was a infamous blunder. The facts are simply these—A Reform Meeting, consisting of close on 100,000 persons, met in an open space in Manchester, where the Free Trade Hall now stands, and the celebrated Reformer Hunt took the chair. He had only spoken a few words when the meeting, which was a most orderly one, was suddenly assailed by a charge of cavalry, assisted by a Cheshire Regiment of yeomanry, *the outlets being occupied by other military detachments*. The unarmed multitude were driven upon each other; many were ridden down by the horses, or cut down by the riders. Eleven persons were killed, and over 600 men, women, and children injured. The following is unique, as showing the shifts a great mind was compelled to resort to in order to defend such an action:—

"In reviewing the late melancholy disturbances at Manchester, we see strong reasons for distinguishing between the acts of the magistrates and those of their agents. After having read with care every account which has yet reached us, we shall report faithfully the impression left upon our minds. The magistrates have in our judgment taken no step but such as sound discretion warranted. The meeting, both from its size and its composition, was dangerous to the peace and property of the neighbourhood: from its objects and its character as determined by the terms in which it was summoned — by the known tendency of all such meetings — and by the complexion of the mottos upon some of the banners it was a seditious meeting. The magistrates were therefore justified in dissolving it. It was their duty to do so. But on this, as on all other occasions, there is a conspiracy for the purpose of calumniating the magistrates: and, as usual, the calumnies are inconsistent: by some, they are accused of not

having read the riot act: others make it the very ground of accusation — that they *did* read it. Never yet indeed, since there were mobs to be controlled and laws to control them in England, never yet (we will venture to say) did any magistrate cause the riot act to be read — but that some were found to complain of it as an unnecessary precaution. This part of the calumnies therefore we may safely neglect. But the Manchester magistrates are further accused of credulity with reference to the intentions of the disaffected and of spreading a panic through Manchester. Let it be recollected that, previous to the final evidence upon which the magistrates grounded their belief in this point, they had the depositions upon oath of four soldiers who had acted as drill serjeants to the fact that some movement upon Manchester was meditated: the scenes at that time passing in Macclesfield gave a strong color of plausibility to the tale: and surely the number reported to be in march (eight or ten thousand) could not reasonably appear very extravagant to those who had but the day before witnessed an assembly of more than fifty thousand. This and much more we might urge in behalf of the magistrates if we supposed them to stand in any need of defence: but we presume that the general feeling will be—that they have discharged their duty under trying circumstances in a way satisfactory to the country."

A LOYAL DECLARATION.

On the 31st of October, 1818, we find De Quincey celebrating the anniversary of the King's Accession in a jubilantly loyal "essay," from which the following passages are taken:—

"An allusion however to an occasional event may seem to appropriate the poem to a season and to the expression of a fugitive interest. But the battle of Leipsic or any event on that scale of grandeur and *productiveness*, is an event of all seasons and has a perpetuity of presence in the memory of the feeling patriot. At the period of that battle, France was in the noviciate stages of that awful penance which — by the justice of Heaven — she has been compelled to undergo for the intolerable insults and aggressions offered by her to the rights of nations and to the dignity of human nature. That penance, connected (as it so often was) was the lively and experimental remembrance of those indignities, gave an interest cosmopolitically diffusive to triumphs, which would else have been restrictedly national; and again inversely

to triumphs, which would else have been as languidly affecting as concerns purely cosmopolitical, it gave the depth and fervor of a national and even a personal interest : every battle at that time gained over the French was in the feelings of joy which accompanied it, punctually local to each individual hamlet in Europe ; whilst in the benefits which it dispensed, it was co-extensive with the terraqueous globe. Feelings thus profound, for benefits thus extensive, should have a proportionate duration : gratitude thus lively, and exultation thus righteous, should at no time be obsolete. For events, that are cardinal to the welfare of humanity, are in a measure—by the strength of feeling which they rouse—co-present with every moment in the whole succession of time through that generation of men for whose benefit they operate ; every event of that magnitude diffuses a virtual presence over a large tract of succeeding years. On this principle (which may seem obscure or over-subtle when presented analytically to the understanding, but which is nevertheless, practically involved in the familiar experience of our feelings), the triumphs commemorated in the last line of the sonnet may even now be as properly said to be the triumphs ‘ *of this hour* ’ as they could be so entitled at the moment when the poem was written.”

The poem referred to was contributed to the *Westmorland Gazette*, October 31, 1818, by Wordsworth. We reprint it in the form it appeared, merely presuming that the punctuation is De Quincey's, which differed slightly from the form the poem finally assumed as revised by the author.

SONNET.

Now that all hearts are glad—all faces bright,
 Our aged Sov'reign sits,—to the ebb and flow
 By States and Kingdoms, to their joy or woe,
 Insensible : *he* sits deprived of sight,
 And lamentably wrapped in two-fold night,
 Whom no weak hopes deceived ; whose mind ensued,
 Through perilous war with regal fortitude,
 Peace—that should claim respect from lawless might.
 —Dread King of Kings ! vouchsafe a ray divine
 To his forlone condition : let thy grace
 Upon his inner soul in mercy shine :
 Permit his heart to kindle and embrace,
 —Though were it only for a moment's space,—
 The triumphs of this hour ; for they are *THINE*.

The Radical tumults of 1819 exercised De Quincey's mind to an extraordinary extent, and we find him breaking out frequently in the most sanguinary diatribes. We will conclude this division of our pamphlet with the following specimen of our author in quite a moderate frame of mind : —

"Parliament has met. The licentious audacity of designing demagogues, and the rapid strides of blasphemy and sedition called loudly for its special interference. The Regent's speech from the throne clearly explains the momentous occasion for so early a session. The House of Lords, by an immense majority, sanctions the measures of administration. In the Commons House the discussion is lengthened to an adjourned debate ; but from the specimen of the first night, we may anticipate an equally overwhelming mass of loyalty and patriotism in that assembly, to support by vigorous and efficient means the hands of the executive for the preservation of the country. The occurrences at Manchester form a prominent feature of the first debates in Parliament: the illegality of the public meeting held there is universally admitted : and who is there in the country who does not exult in the complete refutation of the base calumnies of factious journalists so long heaped upon the Magistrates of Lancashire.

Let the sceptic read the unanswerable speeches of Lord Sidmouth, Lord Liverpool, and Lord Castlereagh, and be silent. — Lord Fitzwilliam's removal from office was another leading topic with some of the Whig-Opposition. His Lordship's private character is universally respected, but that ought to be no plea for his retaining a place of high trust and responsibility, when his public conduct renders him unworthy and unfit for the dignity which he in so dastardly a manner has compromised.—The associate (even for a moment) of Radical Reformers, — of spreaders of sedition and impiety, ill accords with the office of King's Lieutenant ! It was therefore a wise measure to shew a great example of decision by a prompt dismissal of the Noble Lord from his high situation.

The duty of Parliament is arduous in the extreme. We are satisfied that no clamour of the disaffected will induce it to shrink from a strict performance of that duty. The people of England are justly jealous of their Constitutional liberties.—But when base and designing men too successfully encourage the lower classes to riotous excess — when the licentiousness of the press becomes

abominable in the sight of all good men, it becomes necessary that even our liberties should be abridged, and our comforts retrenched for a while, rather than our laws and our altars should be suffered to fall in one common confusion with our property, a prey to the wildness of revolution.

LITERATURE.

In 1857 De Quincey contributed to an Edinburgh monthly magazine called *The Titan* an article on the dialect of the Lake District. Mr. James Hogg, in his work *The Uncollected Writings of Thomas De Quincey* has republished that article. In it Mr. De Quincey says:—

“Thirty-seven, or it may be thirty-eight, years ago, I first brought forward my Danish views in a local newspaper—namely, *The Westmorland Gazette*, published every Saturday. The rival (I may truly say—the hostile) newspaper, published also on Saturday, was called *The Kendal Chronicle*. The exact date of my own communication upon the dialect of the Lake District I cannot at this moment assign. Earlier than 1818 it could not have been, nor later than 1820. What first threw me upon this vein of exploring industry was the accidental stumbling suddenly upon an interesting little incident of Westmorland rustic life. From a roadside cottage, just as I came nearly abreast of its door, issued a little child; not old enough to walk with particular firmness, but old enough for mischief; a laughing expression of which it bore upon its features. It was clearly in the act of absconding from home, and was hurrying earnestly to a turn of the road which it counted upon making available for concealment. But, before it could reach this point, a young woman, of remarkable beauty, perhaps twenty years old, ran out in some alarm, which was not diminished by hearing the sound of carriage wheels rapidly coming up from a distance of probably two furlongs. The little rosy thing stopped and turned on hearing its mother’s voice, but hesitated a little, until she made a gesture of withdrawing her handkerchief from her bosom, and said, coaxingly, ‘Come its ways, then, and get its *patten*.’ Until that reconciling word was uttered, there had been a shadow of distrust on the baby’s face, as if treachery might be in the wind. But the magic of that one word *patten* wrought an instant revolution. Back the little truant ran, and the young mother’s manner made it evident that she would not on *her* part forget what had passed between the high contracting parties. What, then, could be the meaning of this talismanic word *patten*? Accidentally having had a naval brother confined amongst the

Danes, as a prisoner of war, for eighteen months, I knew that it meant the female bosom."

The articles referred to appeared in the *Westmorland Gazette* on November 13th, December 4th, and December 18th, 1819; and January 8th, 1820, and were signed "K. K." Three of these are now reproduced for the first time :—

THE DANISH ORIGIN OF THE LAKE COUNTRY DIALECT.

"Rather more than eight years ago I had occasion to learn the Danish language ; in pursuit of what object I shall mention hereafter : at present I notice it only by way of introducing to your readers a remarkable discovery which I then made—viz., that the dialect spoken in Westmorland and Cumberland in so far as it is peculiar to those counties, is borrowed wholly from the Danish. I do not mean simply that it has some affinity to the Danish ; for as a matter of course one Teutonic language must have some affinity to all others of that family ; what I mean is that all the *words* peculiar to the Lake District, at least, and most of the names attached to imperishable objects (as mountains, lakes, tarns, etc.) are pure Danish ; and in that language only have they uniformly a meaning. Sometimes, it is true, a word might be deduced from the Anglo-Saxon ; sometimes from the German, and still more frequently from the Icelandic (which, indeed, is the twin sister of the Danish). But even in these cases the Danish must be reputed the actual, among several possible, parents of our Cumbrian dialect, because whilst they severally furnish a key for particular cases here and there, the Danish only furnishes a master key which unlocks nearly all. This fact I have already said became known to me first in 1811 ; three years afterwards I studied the Danish language more closely, and found still further confirmation of it. From history, indeed, we know that the Danes settled a colony, as in some other parts of England, so especially in "Northumberland," *i.e.*, the county north of the Humber (*viz.*, the six northern counties) : and in this, as in other cases, the evidence of history and language are reciprocal, the records of history lead us to look for the traces of this or that language, and the traces of this or that language confirm the records of history. — Not doubting that your readers will be interested by the fact here brought forward I shall next week communicate some of the proofs, upon which it rests and by way of praxis upon my general thesis, I shall

apply the Danish language to my particular case of some Westmorland valley and (according to my former metaphor) I shall compel it to unlock the secret meaning of that ancient nomenclature, which with respect to the more permanent features of nature, still survive in the use of the rural population. For the present, having answered my immediate purpose, which was to fix the attention of your readers more fully by announcing it beforehand,—I shall conclude with a short classification of languages in general. I do not offer it as containing anything new to scholars, but it will be interesting to those whose opportunities have not allowed them to investigate this department of knowledge, and moreover it will serve to explain the meaning of the words *Celtic* and *Teutonic*, which in my next letter I may now and then have occasion to employ.

Affiliation of Languages. — The languages spoken upon our Planet, may be distributed into three great races, viz., the Oriental, the European, and the Barbarous. 1. By the Barbarous I mean all the indigenous languages of America—of Southern and Central Africa — of Northern and Central Asia — of Australasia — of Polynesia, &c. It were to be wished that as many as possible of these languages should be examined : for an examination of some has tended to answer one great objection brought against the Mosaical derivation of the human species from common parents : how, it was said, could the Islands of the Pacific, &c., have been peopled from any continent — all continents being so remote — during the infancy of navigation ? Now, on some of the remotest islands the language has been found to be manifestly derived from the Malay (an Asiatic language) : and thus the fact that they *were* peopled from a continent is established, be the mode ever so difficult to explain.—2. By the *Oriental* I mean chiefly the languages now spoken throughout the south of Asia—beginning from Arabia, and thence crossing eastwards through a belt of great breadth to China and Japan. This race of languages is very numerous : and, by the exertions of the various Missionaries and of the Bible Society (to whom scholars owe infinite thanks), they are brought more and more within the "field of our glasses"; so that now, sitting in our European studies we can examine their structure and affinities ; in 1813 the Bible was actually translated, or then in a course of translation, into no less than 20 languages between Persia and China. The languages spoken in the great

Indian Archipelago must be placed in this or in the preceding class, according to the degree of civilisation among those who speak it. In this class must be placed also one language spoken in Europe — the Turkish — and more than one spoken in Africa — viz., those which have descended from the Ancient Coptic, and Æthiopic, and all the Moorish dialects which have diverged from the original language carried along the north coast of Africa by the Saracens (that is the Arabs) in the 7th and 8th centuries. To this class also belong a splendid train of dead languages, as *e.g.*, the Hebrew, the Syriac, the Chaldee, the Samaritan, the Phœnician or Philistine language and its daughters the Punic or Carthaginian, the Sanscrit, or Sungskrita which is the sacred language of India, and read in every part of India. Finally in this class the Arabic and Persian may be considered the classical languages. In both the literature is extensive : and the numerous MSS. of both which our great English and Continental libraries contain, together with the many aids, in the shape of grammars and dictionaries make it easy for any European to study them, and with these two languages only, has the general scholar any need or any temptation to trouble himself.—Two races being despatched, viz., the Barbarous and the Oriental, we come now to the last and that which most concerns us, viz., the *European*. In this race there are four great families, of which two have intermarried with each other, and two have kept themselves wholly distinct. All four have spread themselves from east to west : all four are therefore of Asiatic birth. Taking them in the order in which they have succeeded to each other they stand thus : 1. The Celtic : 2. The Latin : 3. The Teutonic, (or Gothic) : 4. The Slavonic. I will go over the chief languages of each family. 1. The Celtic is the most ancient family of all : for, in the time of Julius Cæsar (*i.e.* 50 years before Christ), a Celtic dialect was spoken in Gaul, (*i.e.* throughout France and the Netherlands) : and probably the very same language, but certainly a language of the same family, had crept into the *ultima Thule* of Europe — the Britannic Isles. This language subsisted in England for more than four centuries after Christ, when it was gradually driven by Saxon (*i.e.* Teutonic) tribes into Wales—Cornwall—Cumberland (*i.e.* the kingdom so called comprehending Westmorland, Cumberland, &c.) — and the kingdom of Strathclyd. At present this most ancient family of languages is everywhere either decaying or

decayed. In the dominions of our own gracious sovereign four Celtic languages are still spoken, and a fifth survives in books : the four living ones are the Welsh—the Manks—the Irish—and the Gaelic (spoken by the Scotch Highlanders), the fifth, which is orally extinct, is the Cornish : within the memory of some now living we believe there was an old woman in Cornwall who used, when angry, to scold in Cornish : but she scolded her last we are told more than 50 years ago. In Spain there still survives a sixth member of this family, viz. the Basque, spoken in the province (we should say *kingdom*) of Biscay : in France a seventh member, viz. the Armoric or vernacular language of Brittany (Basse Bretagne) : and somewhere among the Alps an eighth member, of which I do not recollect the name. These eight languages we believe are all of which now remain of the Celtic family of languages ; which probably entered Europe 3,000 years ago. It has been gradually pushed up by Teutonic encroachers to the very western-most limits of Europe : and it is remarkable that it nowhere maintains its ground in such perfect security from intrusion as in the absolute west of the old world—viz. in the county of Mayo and other parts of the province of Connaught in Ireland. The characteristics of this family as might be expected are great simplicity and penury of words unfitting them to express any but elementary thoughts and feelings—and an obstinate repulsion of all other languages so that no Celtic language has ever blended or amalgamated with any neighbouring language of Teutonic origin.

2. The second family is the Latin, and her four daughters are the Italian, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the French. I do not mean that they are derived exclusively from the Latin : in all of them, some Gothic or Vandal (*i.e.*, Teutonic) dialect—and in the second and third a Moorish or Arabic dialect has furnished the superstructure : but the basis of all is Latin. The Latin itself is notoriously the child of the Æolic Greek by a Celtic mother : at that time the Celtic was younger and less prudent, I suppose, than it has shewn itself in later ages. Of Latin I need say nothing : as it is a language of no great compass, so on the other hand it is a language unrivalled for severe and masculine dignity : Two centuries ago it was the universal language of scholars throughout Europe : by the laws of the German Empire, which Empire, by the courtesy of Europe took precedence in Christendom, the Latin language took precedence of all modern languages! no other

was to be used in diplomacy: and if a magnanimous spirit governed the abject statesmen of modern England, we also should refuse to negotiate in the language of our mortal enemy — but, like Cromwell, should compel every nation to approach us either in our own language, or in the common language of Europe: but whatever might suit the feelings of the high-minded Cromwell, modern statesmen have instinctively adopted a language, which in point of dignity is on a level with the cackling of poultry or the whinnying of horses, as more in harmony with their own temper and spirit than the language of the Scipios and of Cæsar. — 3. The third family of languages is the Teutonic: to this belonged of old the languages of all those who from the times of Marius were butting with their horns against the Roman Empire (the Cimbri and the Teutones) until they overthrew it and overflowed all its Western Provinces under the names of Heruli — Anglo-Saxons — Ostro-Goths — Visi-Goths — Vandals, &c., about the fifth century. The original mother is generally supposed to have been the Gothic: of which there is one specimen remaining—viz. the famous Silver Manuscript (so-called from its silver letters): it contains the four Gospels and part of the Epistle to the Romans, and is supposed to have belonged to a Gothic Prince as early as the fifth century. This old lady had four daughters, who are now all as dead as herself, viz. the Anglo-Saxon, the Cimbric (otherwise called the Runic), the Frankish and the Frisic. But, though dead, all these languages have left children behind them. In particular, as we all know, the most illustrious English language is the immediate heiress and representative of the Anglo-Saxon. Some people think that the Anglo-Saxon was not the daughter but the sister of the old Gothic: in which case the Gothic will be aunt to the English: but I believe the fact is as I have represented it, viz. that the old Gothic is our grand-mamma. All the other Teutonic languages are of course our first cousins, viz. the Dutch or Belgic; the German, the Icelandic, and the three Scandinavian languages — *i.e.* the Danish, the Norse or Norwegian, and the Swedish. The German, I ought to add, is an equivocal word: for there are three different languages which claim that title, viz. the *Upper* German (Ober Deutsch) spoken in Austria, Suabia, and generally in South Germany, the *Lower* German (Nieder Deutsch or Platt Deutsch) spoken in North Germany; and the *High* German (Hoch Deutsch) which is spoken all over Germany, by people of

education : and which has been their sole language of books since the time of Luther. The fourth family of languages is the Sclavonian : this family possesses the whole Eastern region of Europe, and sweeps in a vast zone from Archangel on the Tey Sea to Dalmatia—Istria—Stiria, &c., on the Adriatic, and almost up to the gates of Venice. Of this family the most polished language is by general consent the Russian.—Such is the list, and such the genealogy, of the principal European languages. But there are some anomolous languages which cannot be referred to any one of these four families : I recollect three. First the Lappish, spoken in Lapland ; which is not (as from its situation and political connexion one might suppose) a Teutonic language, but a kind of mongrel language which I believe nobody knows anything about unless it be Laplanders and Reindeer. Secondly, the Maltese language : which, I believe, is a hybrid language compounded of Arabic and Italian, and therefore well-fitted to occupy the middle station 'between Christendom and the Mahometan East. Thirdly, the Romaic : and its divine ancestor — the language of Pericles, of Plato, and Euripides : of which the Fathers of the Christian Church did well to affirm — that, if at the day of judgment any human language should be spoken, doubtless it will be Greek.

P.S. — I might have added the Latin family. 1. The *Lingua Franca* spoken up and down the Mediterranean (especially in the Levant) : I believe its basis is Italian. 2. The Occitanique, or language of the Troubadours. 3. The corrupt Latin of law, &c., in the middle ages."

I shall now proceed to establish that proposition which I advanced some weeks back in relation to the dialect of this country. At that time I asserted, as some of your readers may recollect, that the Westmorland dialect does not simply resemble the Danish language—as English universally resembles Dutch, and as Dutch resembles German ; but that in all its peculiarities, *i.e.* wheresoever it deviates from the general dialect of the north, it is verily and indeed Danish—neither more or less ; and that as good Danish will be spoken in Kendal market next Saturday as by any professor at Kiel or Copenhagen. This in substance was the proposition which I then brought forward and promised to make good : and I now proceed (in the pawnbroking phrase of Parliament) "to redeem my pledge." Let me first, however,

return my thanks to your correspondent UN CLERC for the information which he has so obligingly communicated on the subject of the Gothic MS. discovered at Milan. It is more of his courtesy than of my deserving that he supposes it to have "*escaped my notice*," if by that phrase he means that I omitted to notice it from inadvertance: the truth is I was utterly ignorant that any such discovery had been made: which is the more surprising to myself inasmuch as I was doubly in the way of knowing it; first, from my great attachment to Northern Literature; secondly, from the peculiar interest with which I have regarded the other discoveries made of late years in the Milan Library. But so it was: and I have no excuse for myself but this—that I live very much out of the world, and that I have never yet applied myself formally to the study of the old Gothic: what I know of it is through the spectacles of derivative languages: though by the way, I may add—for the encouragement of those who are meditating to pursue this walk in literature—that many years ago, when I read no Teutonic language except my own and the High German, I seldom found any difficulty in translating such passages either of the Gothic or of the Frankish (*i.e.* Feudesque or Franco-Theotiscan) as I happened to find cited in dictionaries or glossaries: it was some assistance to me that I was familiar with the elder literature of England and Scotland in which so many footsteps of the Gothic remain: and some assistance also that I had made myself acquainted with the main joints and hinges of the Gothic and Frankish—such as 'and' 'for,' 'but,' 'because,' 'if,' 'when,' 'where,' &c., these assistances premised, I am persuaded that no man—being master of the German—will find much more difficulty in reading Gothic than in reading Chaucer: and so intimate is the connection between all the Teutonic languages that he who has acquired any two has already half-mastered all the rest. Indeed I affirm that in eight months a hard student may, by adopting a proper method, acquire a competent skill in all the living languages descended from the Gothic; in eight months, that is, supposing him a married man; "single gentlemen" in six.—But all this is so much digression from the business which lies before me: briefly then assuring UN CLERC that I shall be happy to profit by any further notes or strictures which may occur to him upon any part of what I advance, I will address myself without further preface to the task I have

undertaken—of hunting back the Cumbrian dialect to its Danish original : premising this only—that by the Cumbrian dialect I mean, with a reference to my own knowledge of it, chiefly that modification of this dialect which is spoken within the ring fence of Kendal, Penrith, Keswick, Lorton, Egremont, Coniston, Hawkshead, Burton, Kendal.

Etymology is at best a dry subject, and, therefore, to enliven it as much as may be, I will introduce my first specimens of Danish in connection with the circumstances under which they drew my attention to the general fact which they illustrate. It was in the hottest part of a very hot day of August in the year 1812 or 1813 that I happened, in the course of a long walk, to find myself in a sequestered valley of Westmorland : retired from the high road at some little distance I saw a respectable farmhouse, towards which I turned and begged permission to rest myself within doors for the sake of obtaining a short respite from the oppressive heat of the sun : this being immediately granted with the cheerful courtesy of a Westmorland 'statesman, I stepped in and took a seat. Whilst the master of the house was conversing with me upon Bonaparte—Marshal Blucher—the National debt and other like pastoral subjects, I observed, in the furthest corner of the house, a fine young woman sitting with an infant in her lap, and busily engaged in playing with it. So entirely was she taken up with her child, that I am afraid she paid very little attention to the wisdom with which we settled the affairs of Europe ; and that even to the full and clear payment of the National Debt up to the last sixpence without defrauding a single creditor, failed to give her that satisfaction which at another time no doubt it would have done. Indeed, to say the truth, the loveliness of the youthful mother and child, whose joint ages I imagine would not have made eighteen years—their innocent happiness and the perfect love which appeared to connect them—combined to make up a picture so touching and beautiful, that even I, Stoic as I profess myself, could not contemplate it wholly unmoved. My attention being thus drawn to them, I could not fail to hear something of what the mother addressed to her child, and though all passed in an under voice, little above a whisper, I was struck by the words "No more Patten," repeated two or three times and accompanied with a playful gesture as though defending her bosom from the busy little hands of the

laughing infant. This word '*Patten*' arrested my notice; for I remembered that '*Patte*' a dissyllable — the e final pronounced as the *a* in *sopha*, or the e in the French article *le*, is the Danish word for a woman's breast. The plural of this word is '*Patten*' pronounced exactly as it is in Westmorland: and the proper expression (indeed the only expression in Danish from weaning a child—is '*at vænner et barn fra Patten*' (lit. *to wean a child from the breasts*); in which sentence, as the initial letter in '*vænner*' is pronounced like a w, a Westmorland man would be at a loss to know whether to call it English or Danish. To be sure that I had heard the word accurately, I took the liberty of asking the young woman what was the meaning of the word '*Patten*,' which if I was not mistaken, she had addressed to her child: hereupon the old statesman burst out a laughing; but his grand-daughter (as I found she was) blushed and evaded my question by saying that it was only a word used to children. I apologized for my freedom by explaining its object; and from the old man I learned that my conjecture was right; and since then I have had it frequently confirmed. Such was the occasion of my first coming to perceive the Danish origin of the Westmorland dialect; and I have since met with further cases of the same fact in such abundance as would furnish matter for a small dictionary. Some few of the most striking instances which rest upon my memory I will here adduce. Walking near Ambleside I heard an old woman exclaim "I'll *skyander* him if he comes here again." I stepped up to her and conjured her, as she valued the interests of Philology and the further progress of Etymology, that she would expound to me that venerable word (as I doubted not it would prove) which she had just used. Why 'said she,' 'I'll give him a *serrogle*.' This was '*ignotum per ignotius*' with a vengeance: however I remembered the Danish word *skiender* meant to *scold*, to *rate*, &c. and on cross-questioning the old woman it appeared that such was the meaning which it still bore in Westmorland. 'Didn't thee blaspheme my name, and shake thy *neif* in my face at Keswick on Pie Saturday?' said a man at a country fair to another with whom he was wrangling. '*Næv*' (pronounced *neif*) is the Danish word for *fist*: but this word is found south of Westmorland: for it is used by Shakespeare. "Master," said a Cumberland girl to me, "Is I to sweep the *attercops* off them books?" By *attercops* (as I need scarcely tell your readers), she meant cobwebs, in Danish '*edderkop*' is a spider.

It will be seen that the story recorded in the above connected with reference to the *Patten* and child incident, differs materially from that recorded in the *Titan* article. Probably De Quincey, after thirty years, had forgotten the *details* of the incident. The two narratives in no way invalidate or appreciably lessen their philological value. The following is the concluding article from the *Westmorland Gazette* of January 8th, 1820 :—

"1. The Danish origin of the Cumbrian dialect shows itself not merely in a very extensive list of words radically distinct from such as belong to the universal English, and wholly unintelligible to a Southern Englishman—but also in the peculiar pronunciation of many words common to the Cumbrian and the classical English. *E. g.* For a '*drunken* man' the Cumbrians say a '*drukken* man'; for '*wrong*'—'*wrang*'; for '*long*'—'*lang*' (as in *Langdale*);—all of which, though commonly ascribed to provincial mispronunciation, are good Danish. — Again, for '*sneeze*' the Cumbrians say '*neeze*'—which is the Danish '*nyse*'; for '*home*' they say '*yame*'; at least *that* comes as near the sound as I can express : — now '*yame*' is the true pronunciation of the Danish word '*hiem*' (home). So entirely, indeed, does the Dutch pronunciation survive in some words—that I have remarked (and I have heard others remark), among even well-educated people of Darlington, Stockton, and other places in Durham, the Danish practice of sounding the *k* in words beginning with *kn*; as, *e.g.*, in '*knife*' (Danish '*kniv*'), '*knee*' (Danish '*knæ*'), '*kneel*' (Danish '*knæle*') '*knitting*' (Danish '*knytting*') : in all of which words the people of Stockton, &c., sound the *k*; and I think I have remarked the same practice in some persons of education from Penrith (though possibly brought up in Durham). Now this practice is clearly Danish : and so abhorrent to the general usage of England that from the earliest times it has been customary to accommodate to the English pronunciation all Danish names beginning with *kn* by intercalating an *a* between the *k* and the *n*. On this principle we say '*King Canute*'; whereas the Danish historians call him '*Konge Knud*'; which was his real name : and, therefore, it is that our Selden, whose monstrous erudition had mastered every language, ancient as well as modern, from the Euphrates to the Severn, never to mention him by any other name than King *Knout*. Why not King *Knud*? The reader will see below.

"2. So richly indeed is our northern vernacular speech interveined with Danish peculiarities, that even the grossest vulgarisms and barbarisms (as we are apt to consider them) cannot safely be condemned for such—until the Danish and its sister dialects have confirmed the verdict. What greater vulgarism, for instance, is there—according to the general feeling of well-educated persons—than the common substitute of 'I *mun*' for 'I *must*'? Yet this is good Icelandic, if not good English; and in earlier times was used by many tribes of those who were called Danes. 'Duo defectiva *eg mun* et *eg skal* (i.e. *I mun* and *I shall*), in constructione cum aliis verbis, efficiunt orationis structuram non absimilem illi quam habet Græcorum *MELLO*: ut *eg mun giöra* vel *eg skal giöra*, *Faciam* vel *Facturus sum*.' *Ionæ Gram. Island.* p. 109.—Upon which passage the learned Hickes observes—'*Mun* apud septentrionales Angles et Scotos gerundivam vim habet, conjunctum cum aliis verbis: ut *I mun go*, *Abeundum est mihi*.'—Again, to give another instance, I remember that a young woman from Lancashire, who attended me in my infancy, was accustomed, on any sudden surprise, to exclaim '*Odd rabbet it!*'; and I think I have seen the same explanation in some work of l'Estrange's, or Tom Brown's. As English, this expression has no meaning: read, therefore, on my authority '*Udraabet it*, i.e. literally '*Cry out upon it*'—'*Curse it!*' '*Raaben*' in Danish is *to cry* or *ejaculate*, and '*ud*' is the proposition *out*: whence, by the way, '*Outlaw*' in law Latin is *Utlegatus*'; whence also, for analogy's sake, Selden chose to Anglicize King *Knud* into King *Knout*.

"3. Hitherto, I have been indebted for my specimens of Danish to the men of Hawkshead, Ambleside, Bowness, &c.,; that is, to the Cis-Alpines—as they may be called by those who live on the Windermere side of Kirkstone: but these tribes, though speaking very tolerable Danish for people that have had no Danish schoolmasters during the last eight hundred years, are mere novices in that language—compared with the natives of the Trans-Alpine regions of Patterdale, Matterdale, Martindale, &c. There it is that the Danish is spoken in its purity: there lies our Westmorland-Copenhagen. Amongst the Cis-Alpines are found Danish words in abundance: but in the Trans-Alpine vales the very nerves and sinews of the dialect are Danish: the particles of most common use, the very joints for binding the parts of a

sentence together, are Danish : they say *at* for the participle *to* ; as, for instance, ' I tell'd him *at* gang yame ' for ' I told him *to* go home.' They say '*til*' for the preposition *to* ; as ' He came *til* me ' for ' He came *to* me.' They say '*fra*' for *from*. They say '*titter*' for *sooner*. They say '*over*' for *too*, which indeed is common to all Westmorland : as in the two first lines of a song with which I heard a nurse singing a child to sleep :—

Bee-bo, Baby-lo ! Babies are bonny :
Two in a bed's enough—three's *over* many.

All are Danish, except, perhaps, that '*titter*' comes nearer to the Icelandic. In the early Metrical Romances, by the bye, the positive degree '*tyte*,' quick, or soon, is used as commonly as the comparative '*titter*' is in Martindale.

I come now to say a few words on the topographical nomenclature of the Lake District.—In a sublime and very philosophical sonnet Mr. Wordsworth has apostrophised the power of twilight as performing for the external world, as the object of sense, a process analogous to that which he has attributed to the imagination in respect to the world, external or internal, as the objects of thought. Now let us suppose a spectator placed upon the summit of Helvellyn — and that by some process of abstraction '*Day's mutable distinctions*' have been gradually withdrawn from the spectacle below, and only the immutabilities of the scenery preserved : on such a supposition he will have before him a scene the very same which heretofore the ancient Briton or the Dane may have beheld under the same circumstances—

Those mighty barriers, and the gulph between ;
The floods,—the stars,—a spectacle as old
As the beginning of Heavens and Earth.

Whatsoever then under such circumstances the spectators would see — he may expect to find bearing a British or else a Danish name : the grand barriers of the principal mountains — the great chambers of the valleys which they enclose — the lakes — the streams which feed them at the head, and by which they issue at the foot— all these may be expected to bear ancient names ; for these are the ancient features of the scenery—' the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' But the subordinate incidents of the landscape which belong to the hand of man, and are measured as to duration by his years, — such as woods, and the subdivision of lands, roads, and houses,—will naturally have names co-eval with their own origin ; and, even where that origin ascends to a very

high antiquity, it will sometimes happen with respect to houses and inclosures that the pride of ownership has superseded the ancient name by one more modern — especially where they have been acquired by purchase. Houses, therefore, and inclosures cannot in general be expected to bear Danish names. But to this rule there occur to me at this moment two cases of exception : first, it must be recollected that many houses as well as towns borrow from the localities the same prerogative of immortality which the laws of England attribute to the King : they never die ; like Sir Francis Drake's ship, which had been so often repaired that not one of the original timbers remained, there are many houses and towns at this day of which, whilst the materials have perished or been dilapidated, the form has been maintained by successive repairs : wheresoever indeed the site of a house or town is peremptorily determined by the relation in which it stands to water or shelter, we may presume the house or the town to be the modern representative of more ancient structures. And it will present a still stronger ground for presuming this if we find reason for believing that second-rate situations were so occupied. If Aa, Ab, Ac, Ad, &c. be a series of homesteads of which the worst is better than the best of the series Ba, Bb, Bc, Bd ; then will it be some reason for presuming all the first series to have been occupied in ancient times—if we have sufficient evidence that some of the second series were then occupied. Now this evidence is satisfactorily conveyed in the Danish name which to this day clings to certain houses or homesteads of that description. Here then is one case in which the words of man may, in respect to the perpetuity of their names, share in the privilege usually appropriated to the grandest works of nature — viz. by approaching to nature in her immortality. But there is a second case of exception in which there is no need for supposing any such immortality.—Whosoever is acquainted with the pastoral nomenclature — will know that no figure of speech is of larger influence or more tends to disurb the accuracy of its use and its application than the common figure of synecdoche, by which a part is put for the whole or the whole for a part. Very often the name, which in popular usage is understood to denote a mountain or even a range of mountains, will be restricted amongst learned shepherds to a single point or eminence (just as the name *Holland*, by a natural usurpation over the names of the six confederate states, came to

denote all the seven). And, *vice versâ*, the name of a whole mountain (or even of a cluster of separate heights) will be found in some cases to have settled upon an individual estate or field—and thence upon the house of which they form the little domain. Having premised these general remarks, I will now come more directly to the point; and first I will examine the *Appellatives* of topography (*i.e.* the general terms of classification under which we arrange the various elements of natural scenery), and secondly a few of the proper names.

"*Fells*, the most comprehensive designation of mountainous grounds, under which as the *genus* are classed the various species of *How*, *Scar*, *Crag*, &c. I used to derive it from the German '*Fels*,' a rock, but, perhaps, it may come from the Danish word '*Feld*,' a hill or mountain.

"*Dale*, from the Danish '*Dal*,' a valley; and that originally meant a *division*; whence the Danish word '*Dæle*,' a plank, *i.e.* one of the divisions into which a cubic piece of wood was sawed up; and thence our *Deal*, which from denoting the shape and relation has come to denote the species of timber; though I believe that timber merchants still say *Deals* for *Planks*.

"*Mere*, a Lake: I know of no Danish word to which it comes so near as the German word '*Meer*,' a Lake.

"*Beck*, a Brook or Rivulet: Danish '*Bæk*,' a Brook.

"*Holm*, applied to some of the small islands in Windermere: Danish '*Holme*,' an Islet: but this word is perhaps a classical English word, and not merely provincial: thus two very remarkable islands in the Bristol Channel are called *The Holms*.

Hawse, any depression or remarkable sinking in a mountainous ridge which allows a road to be carried over it: thus between Grasmere and Patterdale there is a communication by means of a bridle road carried over a dip at the intersection of Seat-Sandal and Fairfield—either of which mountains at any other point would be almost impracticable. This is called *Grisdale Hawse*. Another lies between Little Langdale and Eskdale, Borrowdale and Wastdale, Ennerdale and Buttermere, Long Sleddale and Mardale (at the head of Hawswater), &c., &c. The word is manifestly the word '*Hals*,' which both in Danish and German means a *neck*: the mountainous pass being imaged under the relation of a neck to the body or main mountain. The word '*Hals*,' by the way, is common in the old English Metrical

Romances under its literal meaning — though never used figuratively as in the Cumbrian. And again, in a whimsical poem entitled '*The Garment of Good Ladies*,' by Robert Henrysoun, a Scotch Poet of the fifteenth century (written, as Lord Hailes had suggested, by way of expanding 1st Tim. chap. 2, verse 9, 11), in which he has dressed a young lady out of an allegorical wardrobe : —

Her hat should be of fair *having* (*i.e. demeanor*),
And her tippet of truth ;
Her patelet of good *pansing* (*i.e. thinking*),
Her HALS-ribbon of ruth.

In which stanza, by the bye, the word '*Patelet*,' which the critics have been unable to explain, may mean her *tucker*, from the Danish '*Patte*,' a woman's breast, which I had occasion to cite before. I need scarcely add that the dropping of *l* in *Hals*, as we do in Cumberland, is agreeable to the analogy of most languages in the same case : thus '*fa's*, and '*ca's*' is common in the old Scotch ballads for *falls* and *calls* : '*Fawse*' is used for *false* : in French '*douce*,' sweet, from *dulcis* : the *Malvern* Hills we call *Mawvern* : *Malham*, near the Yorkshire caves, is called *Mawn* : *Belvoir* Castle, *Bever* Castle.

Tarn, a small Lake usually lying above the level of the large Lakes and the inhabited dales.—In order to justify the derivation which I am going to suggest for this word I must call the readers attention to a nearer scrutiny of its exact definition. That which I have given above is agreeable to the popular usage and meets the case of most tarns as they actually exist : but, if a hair-splitter of logical niceties were to cavil at it, I know not that it would be strictly tenable. To be *above* some dales—is to be *on a level with* others, seeing that their levels are at such various elevations in respect to the sea : and moreover neither of the conditions expressed in the definition is strictly a *sine qua non* ; for I presume that, if a lake were much above the neighbouring lakes, it would be called a tarn—even though it were not very small ; and again I presume that if a lake were a very small one, it would be called a tarn—even though it were not above the level of the neighbouring lakes : indeed this latter presumption is realized in the case of *Blellam Tarn*, a small lake between Ambleside and Hawkshead, and also in that between Carlisle and Hesketh. Thus, then it appears that the definition cannot be a good one, because it does not reciprocate with the thing defined ; for, though every small lake

above other lakes is a tarn, yet every tarn is not a small lake above others. But, though it is not impregnable as a definition, it may answer pretty well as a description of the general circumstances which combine to constitute a tarn: and it will answer still better if to these we add one other which was pointed out to me by Mr. Wordsworth. That gentleman, whose severe accuracy of logic is well known to those who have the honour of his acquaintance, once remarked to me in conversation—that, whereas lakes have always one main feeder, of tarns on the contrary it is characteristic that they are fed by a multitude of small independent rills all apparently equal in importance; or (it may be added) having only a transient pre-eminence according to the accidental inequalities in the distribution of mountain showers (which are often confined to spots of a few square yards) and of snow both in respect to the very various dimensions of the areas which melt into any one rill, and also to the very different accumulations of it by driftings, as governed by the wind and the circumstances of the ground. Thus discriminated then a tarn will be rather a deposition or settling of waters from the little rain-rills converging from the steep banks immediately adjacent, whilst a lake will be the disembouging of a river after it has collected many inferior streams into a spacious bed or area not necessarily surrounded by precipitous banks. With this preface I shall now venture to derive the word Tarn from the Danish word *Taaren*, a trickling or a gradual deposition."

DEFENCE OF KANT AND HIS PHILOSOPHY.

The Life and Philosophy of Kant occupy the greater part of Vol. III. of the 1884 (16 vol.) edition of De Quincey's works. The germ of that masterly survey of the work of the advocate of unconditional veracity is to be found in occasional references in "Essays" in the *Westmorland Gazette*. The most interesting of these consists of a reply to what appears to have been exceptionally ignorant attacks in the local Radical organ of those days. It is as follows:—

"It is amusing to remark the inconsistencies and contradictions into which the *Kendal Chronicle* suffers itself to be betrayed by its enmity to the *Gazette*. The Editor of the *Gazette* had expressed his veneration for the great restorer (and, as he may justly be styled, with reference to some branches, the great founder) of philosophy in the eighteenth century. Forthwith the *Chronicle*

addresses itself to the task of disparaging him. Every stray calumny—which is afloat in the world with respect either to the philosopher or his works—is carefully picked up. First comes forward a writer who pronounces him a mystic: excellent! Kant—the unrelenting and almost persecuting enemy of mysticism as well in the writings of poor Swedenborg as of every other visionary from the times of Plotinus downwards—a mystic! Would to God, he *had been* a mystic! or at least that he had shared somewhat more largely in those feelings which made mysticism possible. We should not have then had to lament the inequality of Kant's intellectual efforts; nor have been under the humiliating necessity of acknowledging that a being so marvellously endowed—in some of whose writings is displayed a pomp and power of the reasoning faculties transcending all precedents even of Greece or England—should in others descend below the level of ordinary men from his defective sympathy with many of the grandest feelings which dignify our nature. But be it so! let Kant be a mystic. Next comes a charge against him (not created indeed but adopted by the *Chronicle*) of quite another family, and wholly irreconcilable with the first:—Kant, we are informed, is a 'hard-hearted logician' (a *hard-headed* one he certainly is) with 'no bowels of compassion for human weakness.' In this charge we have just now virtually admitted that there is some truth: and, as a single illustration of it, we will mention that among the smaller works of Kant is one in which he maintains that a conscientious man would not tell an untruth even where—at no risk of injury to any human being—it would enable him to misdirect a murderer in pursuit of an innocent man: to such extravagant lengths did he push the *use* of principles, where he had once succeeded in deriving them from some *à priori* source. This charge, however, be it remembered, affects only his *practical* works and those with regard to fine arts: in his proper province the sternness of his logic it was which gave him his triumphs over the Bernouillis—over Leibnitz—and (hear and tremble, English pride!) over Newton. So much for two critics; thirdly comes another from Appleby who speaks of Kant's philosophy as 'stagnating' and 'slumbering.' For his own credit a man, knowing anything of the state of literature on the continent, would not have said this:—if ever it could be affirmed of any man that he had agitated and almost convulsed the nation to which he spoke, emphatically might this be affirmed of

Immanuel Kant: since the time of Luther no one man has had so extensive—not so many at any time so deep—an influence upon the course of human thought: and to have attained such an influence by means so little in alliance with any but the sublimer aspirations of our nature and borrowing so little support from the enthusiasm of vulgar passions—is a mystery which, as even the friends of Kant will allow it to be in some part explicable from a strong predisposition in the German people to subtle speculations, so even his bitterest enemies must allow to be in a still greater part explicable only from the superhuman strength of him who profited by that predisposition. Great indeed is the strength of Kant: to other philosophers he stands in the relation of the Titans in Heathen Mythology to ordinary men; or of one of the earliest Patriarchs of the human race in physical powers to his post-diluvian descendants. To such a man and against such attacks it would be almost insulting to offer the protection of a formal defence. Against the weight of all attacks hitherto his name and his merit have powerfully defended him, and such attacks as those we have now noticed make all defence superfluous by destroying themselves or by destroying each other. The first and the second destroy each other. The third, when compared with the facts, destroys itself. But finally, as if this were not enough, the *Chronicle* steps in with a life of Herder which implicitly destroys them all. To suppose Herder worthy of any extended notice is to allow some weight to his opinions. Now he, as this very notice records, felt the deepest veneration for Kant both as a moral and intellectual being—so long as he was on terms of amity with him. In the main work of Herder (*Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*) even livelier expressions of this veneration will be found than those cited in the *Chronicle*. But he wrote, the *Chronicle* will say, against the cardinal work of Kant. True: and from what impulse? From revenge. And with what effect?—Let the *Chronicle* answer—‘feebly and ineffectually.’ All who are acquainted with the *Kritik* of the one or the *Metakritik* of the other will heartily assent to this opinion: both books are at this moment lying before us: and from the title page of the last, which about ten years ago we lent to Mr. Coleridge by way of affording him winter evening’s diversion, we quote the energetic words in which he has recorded his contempt—‘What Hume said of Beattie’s Work may be more

truly applied to these volumes : *it is one big lie in octavo*. Like a Surinam toad, it begins with a mother lie ; and every step it crawls young lies sprout out on its back.' Indeed, the dreams of a lunatic are not wilder or not more incoherent than the theory of the *Metakritik*. Even the admirers of Horne Tooke, much as he is bepraised in it, would scarcely thank Herder for praise so placed and so connected. The worthy man thought he would show Kant that he could not only pull down *his building* ; but raise another of his own in its place, and in the blindness of his revenge never saw that, whilst his doctrines were committing suicide each upon itself or fratricide each upon the other, the venerable object of his malice and his innumerable disciples were standing by as smiling spectators of a storm which fell anywhere but there where it was meant to fall. Let the *Chronicle* take a lesson from this very case. None of its correspondents tell us that they have read Kant ; or even that they have taken the pains to learn the German language : and alas ! to read German is but a very trifling advance towards the power of reading Kant. At any rate, let the *Chronicle* be consistent in its malice : if he or they, to whom we owe these random shots at the great Prussian, be acquainted with German — let him (or let them) read his works : if not, there are many able expositions of his leading system in Latin : at all events, one thing is clear, and we are led by the interests of the human mind to this dilemma : the system of Kant is true, or it is false, now whether true or false *it is unanswered* ;—and it is very popular through the centre and the north of Europe, —and it is supreme in authority over the minds of men in all places except where there is an anarchy of opinion in respect to the great cardinal questions of philosophy. In this condition of its influence it is almost equally important that it should be interpreted whether it be true or whether it be false : and in either case the public will have equal reason to thank the Editor of the *Gazette* or any other person who steps forward as its interpreter : if it be false,—from its popularity, it must be a great obstacle in the way of those who are labouring for the advancement of knowledge ;—and the more generally it is expounded, the more it will stand a chance of meeting some mind able to overthrow it and to write a genuine *Metakritik* : if it be true,—a weight of infinite opprobrium attaches to that nation which is wilfully ignorant of revelation so grand in subject and so vast in compass as those which it presents."

"MONK" LEWIS.

De Quincey to the *Westmorland Gazette* of August 1st, 1818, contributes a lengthy biographical sketch of the life of the celebrated Matthew Gregory Lewis who had just died, and from which the following extract is taken :—

"In 1801 he published two volumes of poems, under the title of *Tales of Wonder* : these merit their title, and abound with sufficient of the marvellous, which seemed to be a favourite theme with him. They also possess great beauty. The *Bravo of Venice* was published in 1804, and *Feudal Tyrants*, a romance of four volumes, in 1806. Besides these, he has published *Tales of Terror*, three volumes ; *Romantic Tales*, four volumes ; and a *Collection of Poems* in one volume. The prominent tone of all these works is the horrible—their prevailing character the supernatural. With a fine and strong imagination, Mr. Lewis addicted himself to the demonology of belles lettres, if we may bestow that appellation upon the darkest German fictions, and the wildest conceptions of romance. But for the revolting excess to which he was so apt to carry his favourite theme, he must have been infinitely popular, since even in spite of this blemish, his animated pictures, his powerful descriptions, his charms of composition, and his agitating situations, have a wonderful hold upon the mind, which cannot resist their effects. Undoubtedly he was more likely to corrupt the stage than to enrich it with dramas within the license which our freedom in that respect admits. But his muse knew no bounds. His tales are excellent of their kind, admirably written, and generally replete with pathos. Of the same nature are many of his minor poems. *Alonzo the Brave* ; *Mary, the Maid of the Inn* ; *Bonny Jane*, &c., are exquisitely wrought : and it should be noticed, that as he was aware of the ridicule that might be attached to that class of poems to which the first of these belongs, and which he may be said to have introduced, he at once blunted the shafts of ridicule by anticipating parody, and evinced his own versatile talent by writing the humorous imitation ' *Giles Jollup the Grave.*' "

PROJECTED EDITION OF ENGLISH POETS.

DONNE AND CAREW.

In the issue for September 19th, 1818, De Quincey is found projecting another "new departure," this time in poetic realms. This project was to publish from time to time selections from the works of the great English poets accompanied by notes, biographical and annotatory. He was evidently intent on bringing out from time to time in the columns of the *Westmorland Gazette*, a new edition of the English Poets, in imitation of Dr. Johnson's great work. In this work he no doubt expected, and could have depended on, the aid of his friends Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, and others, and if the project had been carried out the readers of the *Gazette* and posterity would have benefitted. The first and only attempt in the direction mentioned was but a feeble one, but it is reproduced here :—

SONNET TO DEATH.

BY DR. DONNE.

[John Donne was born in London, in the year 1572, and died in 1631. His Poems gained for him a most splendid reputation, which did not much decay perhaps until the beginning of the Civil War in 1642 : about that time, however, he was eclipsed by WALLER, whose connexion with the Court aided him in that day in obtaining a station in the literature, which from the melody of his versification and the readier intelligibility of his thoughts, and the rarer occurrence of local or temporary allusions, he has in some measure maintained up to this day. On the other hand, Donne,—from the extreme harshness of his metre, and the obscurity of much that he wrote, in spite of the masculine vigour, and in spite of the occasional sublimity of his thoughts—is now almost forgotten. It would, however, be no more than a just expression of respect for memory of this distinguished man, to make a selection, accompanied with illustrative notes from his works, both in prose and in verse : in which latter class the reader will probably think that a high place is due to the following sonnet.]

Death, be not proud, tho' some have called thee
 Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so ;
 For those, whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow,
 Die not, poor death, nor canst thou kill me.
 From rest and sleep, which but thy picture be,
 Much pleasure——then from thee much more must flow :
 And soonest our best with thee do go
 —Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
 Thou'rt slave of state, chance, kings, and desperate men ;
 And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
 And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
 And better than thy stroke.—Why swell'st thou then ?
 One short sleep past, we wake eternally ;
 And death shall be no more,—Death, thou shalt die !

EPITAPH ON LADY MARY VILLERS.

From the Poems of Thomas Carew, 2nd Edition, London, 1642.

[Carew held an office in the court of Charles the First. The exact date of his birth and death, the Editor cannot ascertain. He was one who wrote panegyrical verses on Donne at the time of his death. He is not to be confounded with Richard Carew, the translator of Tasso's Jerusalem. The following poem is reprinted *literatim* without alteration of the spelling, which should always be preserved as a record of the state of the language.]

The Lady *Mary Villers* lyes
 Under this stone ; with weeping eyes
 The parents, that first gave her birth,
 And their sad friends, laid her in earth :
 If any of them (Reader) were
 Knowne unto thee, shed a teare ;
 Or if thyselfe possesse a gemme,
 As dear to thee, as this to them ;
 Though a stranger to this place,
 Bewaile in theirs, thine own hard case ;
 For thou, perhaps, at thy returne,
 May'st find thy darling in an urne.

BONAPARTE.

The following article appeared on January 16th, 1819, and it speaks for itself:—

“There are certain subjects,—such as Bonaparte and Typhus Fever, Gas Lights and Dr. Bell, Lord Byron and the National Debt, Guy Mannering and the North-West Passage, Sir Humphrey Davy and the Lakes, Mr. Kean and the Resumption of Cash Payments, Beethoven and Swedish Turnips, and finally (according to the combination of Goldsmith) ‘Taste—Shakespeare—and the Musical Glasses’—which have a standing interest with the English public, and are (in the theatrical phrase) *stock* articles for tea table conversation. On these subjects nothing can come amiss, and we have therefore extracted an article respecting the first of them, chiefly on that consideration; for any thing relating to Bonaparte has a same hold upon the public interest—founded not so much upon any *general* false estimate now current of his own intrinsic pretensions to notice, as upon a reasonable curiosity, respecting a man whom the caprice of fortune has brought into close connection with the main events of modern History; the curiosity being rather increased than abated by a sense of the grotesque disproportion between the gigantic dimensions of the events and the abject little-mindedness of the agent concerned in producing them. Apart from this chance of amusing our readers, which the article has in right of its subject, it possesses an additional interest from its accidental blunders, trifling as these blunders may seem, one of them at least is characteristic and not wholly uninteresting; and we shall therefore point them out to our readers’ notice.”

1.—The book, which gives occasion to this article, is a treatise upon “*interior* (or, as we in England should say, *inland*) navigation”; and the author is said to be a Lord Egerton. Who Lord Egerton is we do not know: probably Lord Bridgwater is meant, who succeeded to those titles of the late Duke of Bridgwater which did not become extinct for want of lineal descendants, but as the Canal property went chiefly (we believe) to the Marquis of Stafford, it is not easy to understand what particular interest the Earl can have in the subject of canals and bridges. But, however that may be, we remark the mistake chiefly as it is illustrative of the intense egotism in the French national character; it is scarcely possible for a Frenchman to repeat any foreign

name, whether of man, or town, or river accurately, and in most cases not without first of all recasting it in the mould of his own abominable nasal jargon. We could give many ludicrous examples of this, if we had more leisure : but we go on to observe that this intense self involvedness extends itself to innumerable cases of foreign usages, &c., which are all transfigured—in the same mint of national vanity—into such French usages as appear upon a superficial glance to bear the closest analogies to them. This is one, among many other practises, which tend to make the French people (who so conceitedly pique themselves upon their refinement, and affect to think all other nations semi-barbarous) the worst mannered people in Europe. For instance, if there be any one rule in manners which is of catholic obligation, it is—to give every man his proper name and titles in speaking *to* him or *of* him ; now this rule is constantly violated by the French of all ranks : after the Peace of Amiens all Paris was unable to comprehend how the wife of Lord Whitworth could be a Duchess, and accordingly alternately the Ambassador was styled *Monsieur le Duc* ; and her Grace became *Madame Vitvort* ; again, Sir Hudson Lowe is uniformly styled by Bonaparte *Sir Lowe*, in imitation of the French mode of using the title of *le Sieur* : this may seem trivial to a trivial observer ; nevertheless it not only serves to illustrate the egotism we have been insisting on, but also to demonstrate an astonishing dullness and inaptitude for learning in a man, who having such strong reasons for studying our national usages, is yet so profoundly ignorant of them all. If there is any nation whose history and customs Bonaparte's interests should have led him to study, it is England ; if in England there are any establishments, whose true constitution it was of importance that he should know to their very heart's core, they are our military and legislative establishments ! yet in a conversation with Lord Oxford, Bonaparte showed clearly that he thought the difference between a seat in the House of Commons and a seat in the House of Lords indicated nothing more than a difference in weight of purse ; "*la chambre basse*" could be entered at the price of £3,000 ; while perhaps in "*la chambre haute*" the price of admission might be £10,000. With respect to the army, his conversation about the same time with an English officer in reference to the Coldstream Regiment of Guards shewed not merely his utter ignorance of its true constitution, but his utter inability

to put questions in such a way as to draw forth the knowledge which he wished, or should have wished to gain.

2. Brindley, the creator of English inland navigation, is said to have made himself "ridiculously notorious" by a plan for a bridge. If Brindley was ridiculous in anything, it certainly was not in relation to canals and bridges. On such subjects he could stand the jests even of such a *well known* and powerful jester as Lord Egerton.

3. It is mentioned as a surprising discovery, that in 1790 "it was the utmost" if Bonaparte knew how to spell, or understand the French Grammar (implying that after all he *did* understand them), and very consistently proof is immediately alleged that he understands neither. We suppose that we should still further surprise the Parisian Editor, if we were to inform him that by looking into the fac-similies of Bonaparte's letters in the intercepted correspondence from Egypt, he will see that Bonaparte's spelling and grammar had shared the fate of his morals, and had deteriorated so rapidly that all the blunders produced on this occasion in his Corsican billet are mere jokes to those in the Egyptian case. In candour, however, we must admit that Bonaparte, though more than commonly ignorant on these points, had pretty extensive countenance in his bad spelling and grammar from the best of his neighbours. Those who will look into Cléry's Memorial of the Confinement of the Royal Family of France (as originally published in 1793) will see that not one member of that august house could spell decently, and as to moods and tenses, if they ever heard of them, possibly they would upon being questioned have answered as the professor of French did when summoned before a board of commissioners appointed by the Empress Catherine of Prussia for examining the qualifications of the public teachers: this professor being asked the number of moods (*les modes*) in conjugating the French verb, replied that he really could not answer that question; that when he left France there were some thousands of them; but, as they were changing every day, it was possible that the number might be greatly increased. The truth is, spelling and grammar are not at all fashionable accomplishments in France: bad spelling is not peculiar to royal families: even authors in France are not unfrequently ignorant in this point; nearly all of them spell by proxy; *compositors* are the only body of men in France that are independent of a spelling book. Even in England the accom-

plishment, as an essential constituent of a good education, is of comparatively recent requisition: less than a century ago, many authors of the highest name were ignorant of spelling altogether, or very licentious and inconsistent in their spelling. Pope and Lady Mary Wortley Montague are well-known instances, upon the evidence of their MSS., and most others of their day were as ignorant in that particular as they. Lord Orford (Hon. Walpole) mentions a case of a noble contemporary of his, who, being called upon to disavow a libellous pamphlet ascribed to him by report, began his disavowal thus: "This is to *scratify* that the *buk* called the *Snak* in the grass"—whereupon the object of the libel interrupting him, said he would not trouble his lordship for any further certificate that he was not the author of it. In France (which is one proof among many others how much we are ahead of that people in diffusion of knowledge as in all other advantages) the national spelling is vicious to such an extent which makes a chaos of syntax; or, rather, we might say *virtuous*, for it resembles the cardinal virtue of justice in this—that it is no respecter of persons: *j'awroient* for *j'awrois*, and *il etois* for *il étoit*, and similar mistakes are all but universal among those who pass for well educated French people. Bonaparte's ignorance therefore on this subject, though truly in excess (as upon most other subjects), is not without abundant sanction of precedent among many who have had better education than he.

4.—"Lord Egerton," the great jester and demolisher of bridges, adds to these accomplishments (it seems) that of having ascertained the true spelling of Bonaparte's name; this important discovery is announced with as much pomp as if he had discovered the longitude. All French authors, it seems, were divided into two factions upon this great question. The name of Shakespeare has notoriously been spelt six different ways; so that we have room for six factions to work upon his name. It is, however, a singular instance of ignorance, or of forgetfulness, that a Parisian should mis-state the whole of a case so notorious in the facts and the motives as this. The name is probably Buonaparte and the proper pronunciation is of course (to express it to an English ear) Bwonaparta: Such a spelling and such a pronunciation being required by the name as an Italian name; and an Italian name it is. As soon, however, as Bonaparte rose to such situations as gave him a prospect of obtaining supreme power, it became an

obvious policy to alter his name, and so far to assimilate it to the mould of the French language, as to strike out all which carried with it to the eye and the ear of France an unequivocal memorial of his being an alien. Now the *uo* is an abominable combination of vowels in the French language ; and the *e* final, unless accented, must of course be mute in French pronunciation. The name was therefore remodelled ; it was naturalised as a French word by circumcising it into Bonaparte ; and by all France the name is pronounced, of course, Bonaparte. These are trifles, but trifles are amusing when they respect men who have played a conspicuous part upon the great theatre of the world.

DE QUINCEY'S VIEWS OF BIOGRAPHY.

In the *Westmorland Gazette* for October 17th, 1818, De Quincey published from the *Literary Gazette* a lengthy biographical notice of the intrigues and adventures of Madame Florissant, better known as Mrs. Billington,* a celebrated singer of her day : " the greatest that England ever produced," wrote our author. The story is an unsavoury one, and at the end of it De Quincey printed the following editorial note :

"Should the language of this biographical sketch be thought severe, we can only say, that *we* dare not adorn departed profligacy with every virtue under heaven. Instead of taking that dangerous course, we consider it due to every virtuous woman who reads our pages, not to confound with such a character, as it is her glory to bear, that of total disregard to all the purest ties of society and most sacred precepts of religion. Biography, to be useful, is often a painful duty.

OWEN'S INDUSTRIAL AND ECONOMIC THEORIES.

During the time De Quincey edited the *Westmorland Gazette*, he wrote many ponderous articles on " the dismal science of political economy," and these in more elaborate and matured form will be found in his collected works. We content ourselves by reproducing his attack on the mad scheme of a benevolent philanthropist early in the century :—

"Among the numerous imposters and *charlatans* of our days,—with the single exception of Mr. Jeremy Bentham, — we know of none more worthy of exposure (and, we fear, of contempt and indignation) than Mr. Owen. Within the last five weeks we have had no less than three public meetings in London, severally

sanctioned by the presence of a Royal Duke, for the purpose of investigating the gentleman's plan — or rather those parts of it which he has thought it prudent to communicate. Many excellent and able men no doubt attended ; for the professed objects of the investigation could not fail to attract all those whose talents and zeal are given up to public service ; but of men known to the world by their writings especially familiar with the subjects involved in Mr. Owen's proposal we remark only two — viz. Major Torrens and Mr. Ricardo : both these gentlemen have written ingeniously and with much originality upon various parts of political economy ; and both of them very civilly laugh in Mr. Owen's face. 'His benevolence' — 'his enthusiasm' — 'his perseverance' — &c., it is true, they highly extol ; but this is to be regarded as a mere concession made to private friendship, and by way of qualifying the harshness of a naked and unrestricted dissent from the great outline of the plan and its pretensions. We, who have closely examined Mr. Owen's various printed tracts and have watched his proceedings for some years back, must frankly avow that we do not see any reason for giving credit to him on the account of motives and purpose more than all the doctrines which he advances. *Intellectually* he is one of the most imbecile persons at this day existing : and yet he has the confidence to come forward with the air and tone of a Plato, — pointing to New Lanark as a New *Atlantis*. *Morally* we believe him firmly to be under no other influence than that of an outrageous vanity and a delirious thirst after notoriety and power. Hence it is that he is constantly talking of the hostility and hatred which he has had to combat ; though he has met with nothing but civility and kindness. Hence his mystery — his pomp — the extravagance of his pretensions — and his everlasting declamation about his motives. Men, who are conscious of good motives do not talk of them : men of clear and upright intentions do not speak in such words as these, — 'Probe this individual now to the uttermost, and see if it be possible that he can be influenced by any private motive or personal object. If then his motives cannot be impugned — if' &c. [See Mr. Owen's 13th resolution about himself.] For the motives by which a man is governed, Mr. Owen well knows that—in default of better and less equivocal evidence — we are often obliged to take his own word : but he will also know, if he has any of that acquaintance with human nature to which he so loudly pretends,

that the motives which a man acknowledges even to himself seldom express more than a small part of the total influences under which he acts : impulses of vanity and selfishness under a thousand shapes, which no man would erect into motives or deliberately place before his mind as objects whose gratification he was consciously to pursue, do nevertheless govern an infinite part of human actions. Quitting, however, this question; upon which we have said anything only because Mr. Owen himself has said so much,—no purity of intention can bestow value upon a scheme utterly worthless and absurd. That Mr. Owen's scheme may be thus characterized, or any scheme which must infallibly as a first consequence raise the price of corn, will be obvious to all those who are acquainted with the modern doctrine of rent so ably unfolded by Mr. Ricardo.—Rent, and therefore the price of corn, must rise exactly as inferior lands are taken into cultivation. But it is an idle employment of time to trace laboriously the practical effects of a scheme which in its first moving principle exhibits a folly scarcely above idiocy. What is this principle? We shall quote it the more readily because no one has yet attended to it, and the London papers have been most childishly occupying themselves with wrangling about pure trifles not essential to Mr. Owen's system or at best mere outworks. The great principle then from which the whole moves, as laid down by Mr. Owen himself, is this :— 'that production has outrun consumption : ' here lies the evil it seems : and the remedy is — 'to permit consumption to keep pace with production.' *Dolus latet in universalibus* : the word *production* Mr. Owen means to use in a limited sense of the powers at work in manufacturing cotton and woollen goods. That increased consumption would benefit the manufacturers, provided *that* consumption was supported from increased funds, is obvious to a child : but whence are these funds to be derived? From certain agricultural colonies to be established on waste lands : that is, there is to be an increase of agricultural production in order to meet and support an increase of manufacturing production : it is not therefore fresh consumption, but fresh production of one kind which only does or can support the existing production of another, and this it does by means which have never been denied or questioned at any time : no one has ever doubted that more corn might be grown in England, and a greater population — consequently a greater

consumption—might be supported in England. It has indeed often and most justly been maintained that to grow this additional corn upon inferior lands of a fifth or sixth rate quality (such as the waste lands in England) must raise the price of corn generally, since it is that corn, which is obtained from the lowest quality of land, and regulates the price of the whole. Mr. Owen has alleged no argument in disproof of this position: but has simply shewn himself unacquainted with it. — And thus, if interpreted by its words, his great principle is rank nonsense of the most childish kind: if interpreted with the utmost allowance for misuse of language, it turns out to be a humble truism, of no possible application to the circumstances of modern England."



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